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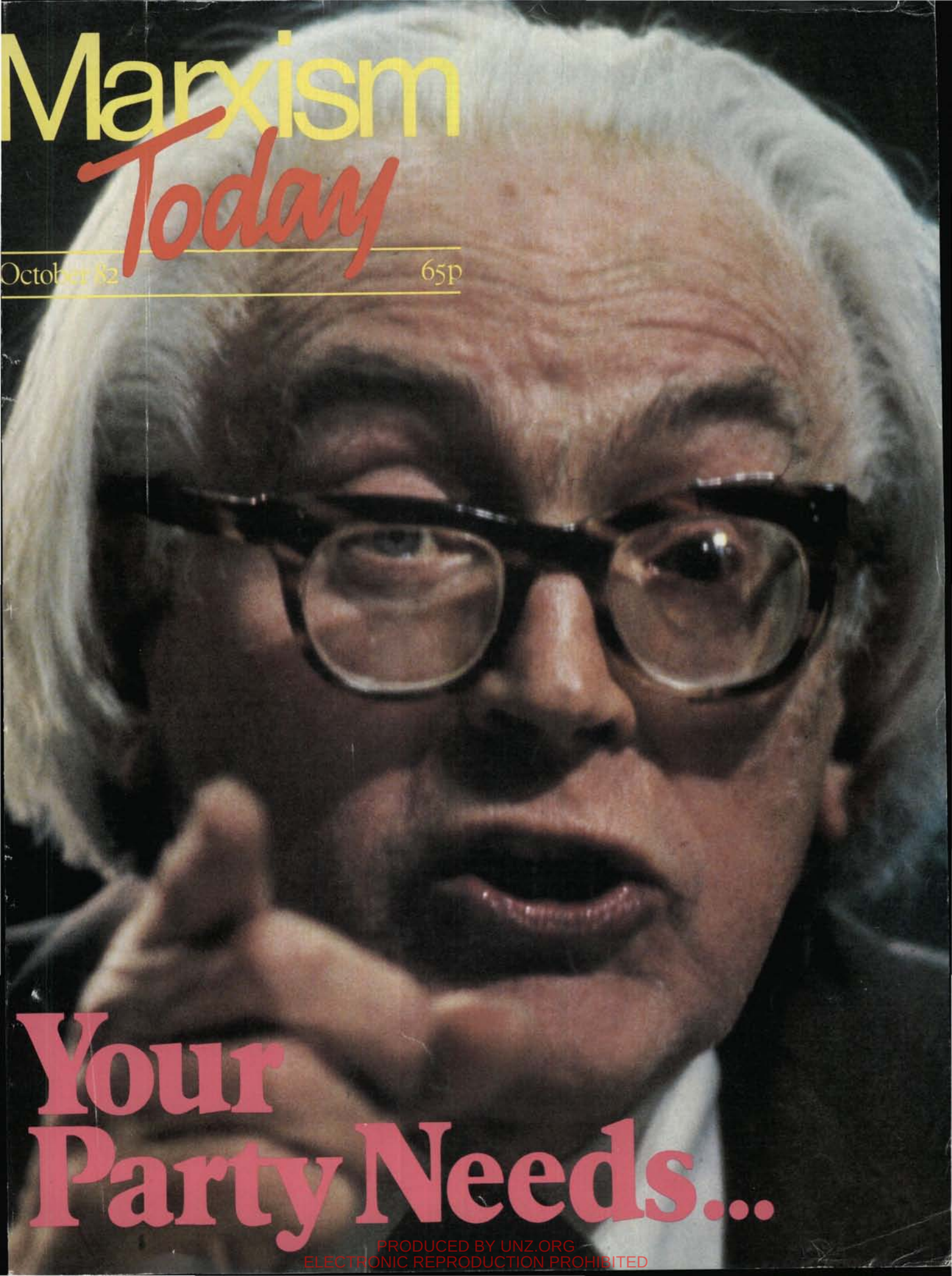

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JOSEPH'S EDUCATION STRATEGY

Sir Keith Joseph, that most enigmatic politician, is just completing his first 12 months at the Department of Education and Science, and already a new method is creeping into the madness. Since 1979 Conservative education policy has been generally myopic, inconsistent, and reckless. It has been subject to one principle — cuts.

Joseph has set off a host of new ideas under the banners of the free market, choice, and privatisation. He has arranged seminars for senior civil servants on the virtues of his ideas, and called for a dazzling array of new reports. Given time — a second stint at the DES under a re-elected Thatcher Government — he could engineer a revolution that could see many gains of the 1944 Education Act undermined.

Jospeh was by Tory standards regarded as a failure in his previous post at the Department of Industry. Even the liberal-inclined Tory Bow Group asked for his sacking, saying transfer to 'another less demanding ministry' was clearly overdue. But he was also installed at the DES as a hard man sent in to ensure the axe really is swung. It is one thing to announce cuts as Mark Carlisle his predecessor did; quite another, it is argued, to see a huge spending ministry meet targets.

He seems keen to do just that. His latest act has been to axe teacher training in 14 polytechnics and colleges of higher education, part of a programme to reduce degree places by 35% next year. Papers being circulated suggest at worst 29,000 teaching jobs will have to go next year, including thousands of compulsory redundancies. Universities have been reeling under cuts estimated at 15% by 1984, while polytechnics and colleges have been facing cuts since Shirley Williams was in charge at the DES.

The madness was well described by Neil Kinnock, the Shadow Education spokesman, who told the Commons those who welcomed the cuts were like the crew of the Titanic giving a standing ovation to the iceberg. They were coming at a time when a record number of young people were reaching the age of 18, when unemployment was at record levels, and when the 'economic development, technologies, social stability and democratic values depended not just on the brilliance of the few, but upon the competence of the many'.

The method is value for money. Some years ago writing about his kind of Tory Party, Joseph quoted a Polish proverb to sum up his views: 'Take what you want, take it and pay for it.' He arrived at the DES armed with the ideas of Hayek and Friedman, widely acclaimed as the high priest of monetarism, the ideologist of the Conservatives, Suslov to Mrs Thatcher's Brezhnev. Three new ideas being discussed show this approach.

Education vouchers have been gaining ground steadily inside the DES since Joseph arrived. Every parent would receive a voucher and be free to cash it in at the school of his or her choice. The theory is that under the influence of parental choice operating in a schools market the efficient would flourish and the others go to the wall. Similarly students could be given vouchers to exchange for courses at universities or polytechnics. The simplicity of the idea however rather belies its crudity. Such a free market would create chaos, and schools could hardly be expected to wither away like inefficient Japanese firms just because they had the misfortune of being in the same catchment area as say Holland Park School in west London. As ever the market would need strict supervision; the social damage would be enormous.

Student loans now seem certain to be included in the next Conseravtive Party election manifesto, with Joseph forcing the pace with the civil servants. Much of the early research was done by another education minister, Dr Rhodes Boyson, but the idea was dropped largely because it would have cost too much to set up, with money flowing back to the Exchequer only after a minimum five year time-lag. The National Union of Students also lobbied strongly

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against the idea, arguing it would do 'irrepairable' damage, and reduce access particularly among working class entrants. The Treasury now seems more inclined to the idea, which has the self-help, value for money ethos that appeals to Joseph.

Joseph's views came out before the Commons Education Select Committee when he said students should be prepared 'to stint' themselves, and take loans or part-time jobs, to pay their way if their grants (real value down 6% in 10 years) are too low.

A third idea being canvassed is that parents should be allowed to contract out of the state school system, as they can in Holland and Denmark, receiving a share of public funds to run their own schools. More extreme ideas such as the introduction of state school fees and charging for nursery education were abandoned under pressure from civil servants. But most schools faced by shortages of chalk and paper and with book purchases severely curtailed are well into the fund-raising game. Success here of course depands on the class profile of the parents in the area.

Joseph has also taken the opportunity to launch a fairly strong broadside on intellectual ideas he opposes, in this case social science in general which to him appears inherently left-wing, and even subversive. Surrounded by his friends from the extreme Institute of Economic Affairs, which would view Thatcher as wet, Lord Beloff, and others, he imposed a swingeing £1.1m extra cut in the budget of the Social Science Research Council. He is yet to pronounce on an official review of the SSRC which in fact recommended it should continue its work as before.

In numerous other ways Joseph has shown his hand. The Schools Council, a quango, has been axed. Plans to introduce a new 16 plus examination to widen the net beyond O-Levels and CSEs have been delayed. He has declared his support for 'schools of proven worth', that is schools with good sixth forms. Opinion as in Manchester is in favour of tertiary colleges, bringing groups of sixth-formers together. He has talked at length about the need to help the least able 40%, and then given just £2 to help. In higher education he is presiding over the end of the Robbins era characterised since 1963 by the principle that those capable of benefitting and wanting education after 18 should be able to do so. University cuts of course seem to have hit the less established places like Salford, Aston, and Bradford, most of all.

What does Joseph himself think? He has admitted concern about quality but no link between cuts and quality. He accepts there will be 'limited damage'. Replying to a question about the effects of lopping £1,000m off school spending, enigmatic as ever, he said: 'I do not believe less means better, or that more means better necessarily.' This despite a report from the Government's own inspectors that cuts in four local authorities were now causing serious concern. Joseph, it is said, is now 'the only minister at the DES'. He works late every night, ploughing through his red ministerial boxes to the bitter end. That kind of diligence could be very dangerous.

Paul Flather

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

On October 20 the electorate of Northern Ireland once more goes to the polls in an attempt to recreate some form of parliamentary assembly. Given the collapse of the previous assembly and of the power sharing executive in 1974, and the inability of the subsequent convention to present a report acceptable to the British government, considerable care was taken on this occasion to present a set of proposals for the new assembly that would avoid the errors of previous approaches. In the event the notion that a new assembly could be established without serious dissension has proved impossible.

The new proposals constitute an arrangement called 'rolling devolution'. In the first instance the assembly will have only consultative powers. It will be able to make recommendations but neither initiate nor pass legislation. However, if sufficient consensus can be generated within it, such powers will be devolved to it. Further, to ensure cross community support for whatever decisions are taken, a weighted majority system will operate where a 70% rather than a simple majority vote is required. The whole set of proposals, to which James Prior has identified himself to a very considerable degree, hinge on the assumption that once a parliamentary debating forum is created, the temptation to abide by the procedures in order to obtain the substance of power will be too great for all the parties to resist.

That assumption, however, looks increasingly less tenable. The Assembly Order had a rough ride through the Commons, coming under considerable attack from both factions of Unionism. The Official Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party argued strenuously for a simple majority system on the basis that anything else was not commensurate with the normal standards of British democracy. In the end the guillotine was employed to ensure that the order got through before the end of the session. There has also been a great deal of debate and conflict within the political parties of Northern Ireland about what attitude to take to the elections and to the assembly itself.

Clear differences have emerged between the Official Unionist Party and the DUP. Enoch Powell's powerful influence within the Official Unionist Party has led it to have reservations about the whole concept of devolution. Powell holds an unreservedly integrationist stance arguing that Northern Ireland should be treated as any other region of the UK subject to the sovereignty of the Westminster Parliament. There are other important forces within the party which oppose this view but it remains influential. Consequently the party lacks a coherent notion about what it should do in the assembly and the majority of its representatives' utterances have been largely negative. Thus the weighted majority voting system has been the object of some attack while fears have been expressed that devolution is but one step towards the unification of Ireland.

Certainly it is true that at one stage there was talk of an Anglo-Irish Council with a parliamentary tier located within the assembly but this has not materialised in the existing proposals. Sections of the party recognise the dangers of a predominantly negative position. The chairman of its legal committee, Belfast councillor Jeremy Birchill, has called for a major initiative on housing, though some suspect an intention to restore housing powers to local authorities and abolish the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Still, the leader of the party has been curiously silent on the major social and economic questions which the assembly might address. His latest statement is for the recall of parliament to reintroduce simple majority voting. In its contest with the DUP for the hegemony of the Unionist bloc, the Official Unionist Party might find itself severely hampered by the lack of a unified and coherent strategy towards the assembly.

The DUP position is more straightforward and easily understood by the electorate. For Ian Paisley the assembly represents not a danger to partition but the opportunity to reinforce it. This is qualified by the absence of what are considered proper voting procedures but even these are more acceptable than the enforced power sharing of the Sunningdale agreement. The attitude of the DUP was aptly revealed at Westminster during the committee stages of the order. Certainly there was considerable opposition to what were conceived as the objectionable aspects of the assembly but

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there were also attempts to actually strengthen its powers, for example to scrutinise the work of the Northern Ireland civil service. Also on economic questions the DUP has shown itself to be anti-monetarist and opposed to Conservative policies and indeed voted against the Government on the Labour Party censure motion on the economy. The assembly is seen as the proper forum to press for special measures of support for Northern Ireland. It would be ludicrous to assert the progressiveness of the DUP but it is successfully using the present situation to present a unified and straightforward position to Unionist voters.

Within the various nationalist parties and groups the situation is even more confusing. When the Assembly was first mooted, Provisional Sinn Fein declared an intention to run candidates in order to offer a real republican alternative for nationalist voters, but with the traditional declaration of abstention if successful. However, largely at the initiative of the IRSP and the IIP, a campaign developed to obtain a total nationalist boycott of the assembly elections on the ground that they were no more than a device to legitimate Britsh rule in Ireland and the restoration of Unionist supremacy. Sinn Fein found the logic of that argument overwhelming but feared that a boycott without the SDLP would allow the latter unimpeded access to nationalist voters with the consequent endorsement of its claim to represent the entire nationalist community. Accordingly Sinn Fein called for a boycott but reserved the right to contest should the SDLP do so claiming that

> 'By openly carrying the banner of the freedom struggle at the election hustings, and by exposing the collaborators, Sinn Fein will ensure that out of the ashes of the assembly the nationalist resistance will arise stronger, more clear sighted and even more confident.'

Despite this stirring rhetoric the indications are that both the IIP and the IRSP will continue to boycott while Sinn Fein will engage in the elections since the SDLP has decided to do so. Some commentators doubt whether Sinn Fein can transform the emotional communal support they receive into votes as successfully as during the hunger strike.

The SDLP has taken the unprecedented decision to fight the elections but to boycott the assembly. The position is a reflection of the considerable divisions within the party on the issue. One faction argued that the new proposals offered considerably less than had been obtained at Sunningdale, and in any case since then the party itself had moved its ground to declare that only a substantial Irish dimension within a new constitutional structure for Northern Ireland would make it viable. The other faction had the more pragmatic view that a failure to participate could only weaken a party whose *raison d'etre* demanded a parliamentary role. The issue was complicated by the bizarre incident where the deputy leader of the SDLP, Seamus Mallon, having accepted a seat in the Senad of the Republic of Ireland, could under existing electoral regulations be prevented from taking a seat in the assembly. After tussling with all the alternatives the SDLP took its present position.

Outside of the main blocs the political parties generally have decided to participate in both elections and assembly. Alliance Party chairman, Sean Neeson has declared that

> 'in the interests of all the people of Northern Ireland, particularly the thousands who are unemployed, it is vital to take the initiative away from the terrorists and place it in the hands of democratically elected representatives.'

The Alliance Party has supported every devolution initiative and this is no exception. The Workers' Party has been unequivocally enthusiastic about the prospects for the assembly. It sees the possibility of modifying the existing assembly brief to include the passage of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, of using it as an arena of class politics and of pressing for economic demands. The demand for a Bill of Rights has become a central demand for certain sections of the left although it has never been adequately explained how it would protect individual rights in detail. If it was to be an internal judicial process, then it would encounter similar difficulties as have beset the Fair Employment legislation; if it was to be external say through the European Court of Human Rights, then redress would be cumbersome and lengthy. The Communist Party of Ireland is using its election manifesto to launch a new economic programme of enhanced public expenditure, to make the demand that Northern Ireland be declared a nuclear free zone and to raise the issues of repression and the declaration of intent to withdraw by the British state.

Unless the patterns of voting in Northern Ireland undergo a radical change and unless the SDLP rescinds its intention to abstain from taking seats, then the prospects for the assembly are hardly bright. The implications of yet another constitutional initiative failing in Northern Ireland are grave. The economy is on the brink of collapse and the entire society is characterised by mass despair and residual violence. A major economic initiative is required by the British government merely to upgrade the economy from its terminal stage. Whatever the limits of the proposed assembly, and these are severe, it represents at least an arena in which demands can be raised about pressing political and economic questions. The degree to which that possibility is ignored is the degree to which every other issue is completely subordinated to the national question in Ireland.

In this respect it is unfortunate that the request from the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering unions to the political parties that they make as a condition of their participation in the work of the assembly a major government initiative on employment and the economy, has been endorsed only by the Communist Party.

The configuration of politics in Northern Ireland has changed enormously. The concept of an anti-unionist alliance which was once the bedrock of progressive politics is losing its currency. Anti-unionism is becoming synonymous with nationalism and hence mitigates against developing the broadest possible forces for progress in Northern Ireland. The elections for the assembly offer the left the opportunity of defining what it is for rather than against and that is probably an advanced democracy strategy. It is a pity that such a strategy is never articulated in a detailed way.

Mike Morrissey

THE TORIES AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE

Mrs Thatcher's check list of autumn problems abroad is relatively brief. Hong Kong and Gibraltar loom with a post-Falkland resonance — which the Falklands themselves seem to lack. Fish and money have to be tackled with Europe. The Soviet pipeline and steel must be stopped from causing any further strains with the US. And perhaps a thought should be given to the Third world; after all the whole pyramid of international debt seems to be crumbling.

However, Poland can probably be put to one side, just as the Middle East has been for the past four months. Arms control can as usual be left to the US. The IRA fits in elsewhere as a domestic issue — or so she would say.

As striking as the problems themselves is the extent to which the more burning ones set her at odds with both the Foreign Office and her own vision of the world.

Where the colonies are concerned this year has already shown how far the FO has moved from the atavistic, imperial nostalgia which dominates her wing of the Tories. The FO is relatively cold blooded over these

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John Minnion

territories. If they cannot be defended, they should not be wept over. The frigates have long been removed from the China seas and Gibraltar — provided it is in Western hands — has lost its strategic value to Britain itself. The problem is thus how to extricate the country from issues bedevilling relations with the world's largest country and preventing Britain from winning any major public contracts in Spain.

To Mrs Thatcher's Tories such thinking is treachery. They have never forgiven Lord Carrington for delivering Rhodesia 'into the hands of the Marxist leader who has been selected by the Foreign Office to perform that role', as *Crossbow*, the Bow Group's scratchy publication, had to say this summer. Such accusations may be poor history: the FO consistently tried to have Mugabe excluded from the elections, only to find itself blocked by Lord Soames. But they make good polemics. Add in a sentence or two about the FO persistently seeking to surrender the Falklands and the sense that the same is about to happen elsewhere is reinforced.

The charge is not entirely wrong, but it begs the question of what is the alternative.

For the new populist wing ruling the Tory Party this problem does not exist. The sun has never set on Pax Britannica and the imperial writ. Natives exist to be civilised. Right and wrong are defined in the terms of Churchill — and solutions in those of Nelson. Mostly self-made men and women, they believe that it is only a lack of determination and fibre which has reduced Britain. The country's decline is the FO's fault rather than that of an economy whose share of world exports has halved in two decades and whose average GNP is now only two-thirds of the OECD average.

The situation can be restored merely by standing firm and sticking to the transatlantic alliance which saw Britain through two world wars.

It is easier for the Whig wing of the Tories to understand that the world does not fit into such tidy compartments. The decline in their aristocratic living standards has long brought home to them the extent to which Britain has declined abroad. Heirs to the more tolerant traditions of paternalism, they have found it easier to take on board such developments as third world nationalism. Better travelled, they have often seen this nationalism at first hand and understood better its social origin.

It is the very elitism of the FO which has long made it more responsive to this view than to the red-in-tooth-and-claw populism of Mrs Thatcher. Where recruitment is concerned the elitism is less pronounced than it was. In the two decades to 1970-4 the proportion of private school children among entrants to the top stream fell from 83 to 56%, and of Oxbridge graduates from 90.5 to 67.5%. This trend has continued while senior posts are now also open to those who enter the FO by less exclusive channels, the old second stream.

Yet sadly, such is the selection process that several members of the FO now complain that their juniors are more conservative than their seniors. But change is slow, the promotion system has long made sure that those with heterodox views are more likely to find themselves dealing with consular cases in the Pacific rather than nuclear issues in Europe. Mrs Thatcher is thus unlikely to see in her time a body capable of responding in her terms to the fact that, apart from the colonial issues, she has less immediate problems with her presumed enemies than with the two alliances which form the premise of her foreign policy.

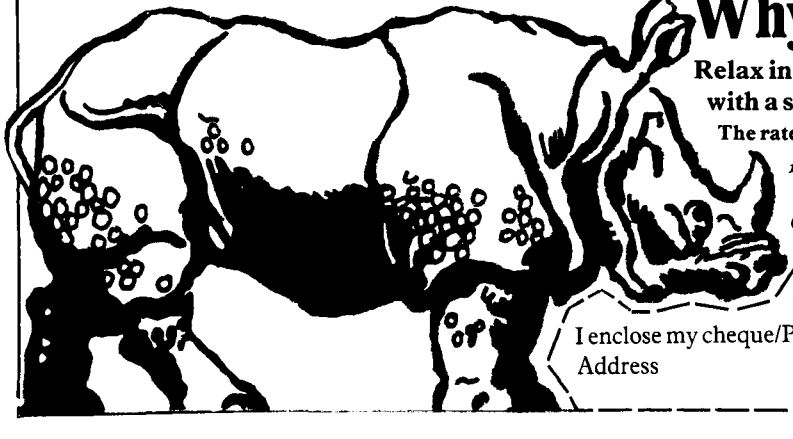
Where the EEC is concerned she finds herself torn between the dictates of short term self-interest and the reluctant realisation that Britain's shrinking voice in the world is better heard when supported by the Community chorus.

With Washington, she is learning that it is not enough to agree with President Reagan on being beastly to the Russians, Cubans, or El Salvadorian guerillas. Nor, to her surprise, is she finding unalloyed support for her decision to buy the Trident: the US Navy fears the implications of this decision for conventional defence of the North Atlantic sea lanes.

Instead, she is being brought face to face with the truth which confronted Churchill late in World War II and which he never seemed to grasp; that Washington will always look after its own rather than its most faithful ally. (*Pace* the Falklands where the US establishment saw that the survival of its main European ally's navy was more important than that of one South American regime.)

The implications of this for Thatcherism are severe, but she has yet to show any sign of coming up with any more realistic definition of Britain's national interests or how they can be protected. Indeed, in these fields she may find herself clashing with the FO, keen as usual to keep peace with governments it cannot push around. All of which increases the chance that Britain will again present the appetising sight it gave in April of the establishment dividing against itself. For if the Franks Commission endorses the widespread view that the FO failed to read the signals coming from Buenos Aires the backbenches are quite likely to react in their time-honoured way to Britain's decline by ordering yet another enquiry into what is already the most enquired into department in Whitehall.

Ken Fowler



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The picture is uneven. On balance the Left has advanced. But the forms are unexpected.

Eric Hobsbawm

The State of the Left in Western Europe

The situation of the Left in Europe is at present so uninspiring, that it is as well to begin by reminding ourselves of the substantial achievements which it has to its credit since the beginning of the 1970s. Ten years ago anti-democratic, largely military regimes of the reactionary Right, long established (as in Portugal and Spain) or more recent (as in Greece) were in power over much of southern Europe. Except for the reversion to military rule in Turkey, this is no longer the case today. Though the long domination of much of the continent by governments of the Right (France, Italy, West Germany) or by 'national coalitions' including the Right (Austria, West Germany) had shown signs of weakening for some time, it was still strong. Left opponents of joining the EEC in Britain could still plausibly argue that to do so would put potential British Labour governments at the mercy of a Community in which the Left looked like being in a permanent and powerless minority. This is no longer the case. The victory of the Left in France in 1981 was a dramatic proof that far-reaching political changes were possible. Since Europe is not separable from the rest of the globe, it is also worth pointing out that fundamental changes have taken place elsewhere. The last colonial empire — that of Portugal — has been liberated in Africa. The white settler regime of Rhodesia is now an African Zimbabwe. Feudal empires have been overthrown by major revolutions in Ethiopia and Iran. The empire of the USA was defeated in South East Asia, and has been notably weakened in Central America.

Whatever the prospects for the future, it is impossible to deny that the position of the Right in the countries of Europe has been weakened over the past ten years. Few governments have moved sharply to the right. Unfortunately Britain is one.

Weakening of Western alliance

So much for national politics. As for international politics, the major developments directly concerning Europe in the 1970s were the growing difficulties within the 'Western alliance' and the revival, at the end of the decade, of a politically significant anti-nuclear movement. The second of these is an unquestioned plus for the Left. We have only to think of the feebleness of these movements in Britain in the earlier 1970s to be convinced of this. The international peace movement has already succeeded in postponing the installation of the new US nuclear weapons in Europe by some years. The first is a plus for the Left, insofar as it has long been the policy of the Right, and in particular the extreme Right, to present every international issue essentially as part of a life-and-death ideological battle between the 'free world' and 'communism', that is to say to define anyone who draws back from 100% alignment with the likes of President Reagan as some kind of a red. Today, when West-West tension is much more common and unmanageable than East-West tension, and the major international disputes (as in the Middle East) can hardly be classified in simple East-West terms, this is no longer a plausible scenario. Insofar as it is no longer realistic to analyse world affairs in terms of the cold war crusaders, even a good many

National Museum of Labour History

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photo: Frank Spooner Pictures

Pandemonium at the 'bourse' (Paris Stock Exchange) after the election of Mitterrand. Faced with a selling stampede the Bourse authorities suspended dealings in quoted French companies.

governments and parties which regard themselves, in principle, as on the US side in any possible conflict with the USSR, are no longer shackled by the conviction that, in public, thay have to make a sales pitch for the entire Washington package deal, whatever it may be at any given time. And they don't. To this extent the new situation weakens the crusading Right and consequently strengthens the Left. Ten years ago, in spite of the general talk of detente, the situation was gloomier in this respect.

There are thus a number of credit-entries on the balance-sheet of the Left. Unfortunately it cannot be denied that the debits are at present more prominent.

The world capitalist crisis

We may begin with the obvious fact that world capitalism is in its deepest crisis since the 1930s. Indeed the present crisis is in its way as serious as it was then. For many years after the war orthodox economists thought the problem of capitalist crisis had been overcome — largely, they felt sure, owing to their own advice. This confidence was based partly on the extraordinary period of boom and secular growth through which the world economy passed in the 1950s and 1960s, and partly on the undoubted fact that the most typical fluctuation of the capitalist economy, the so-called 'trade cycle' of alternating boom and slump, seemed to have become extremely attenuated. It still functioned mildly, but did not make any serious inroads into that 'full employment' which became a reality in many — but not in all — capitalist countries during those decades. With very few exceptions, the orthodox economists, and with no known exceptions the governments of capitalist countries, overlooked the periodic plunges of the world economy into lengthy periods of crisis and difficulty, which have marked the history of capitalism; for instance in 1815-1848, 1873-96, 1920-48, give or take a few years either way.

> the age of the 'economic miracles' of the 50s and 60s is past

We have once again plunged into such a period; possibly — some might argue —since 1968, undeniably since about 1973. It has already lasted the best part of ten years, and (except in the immediate neighbourhood of Thatcher and Reagan) the predictions of imminent recovery and return to growth are no longer heard. Most serious observers would be surprised if this period of global depression did not last for the rest of the 1980s. Whatever the short or long term future of capitalism, the age of the 'economic miracles' of the 1950s and 1960s is past. Mass unemployment is here again on a scale unimagined for more than a generation. Even the richest of capitalist countries, used to fending off social unrest by very expensive systems of social security and other supplements to income, are squeezed between the slowing of economic growth, which used to make these expenditures tolerable to business, and the end of full employment, which used to make the commitment to social security that much less onerous.

Meanwhile hard times are returning to the peoples of countries which had forgotten about them, and harder times to those which never had a chance to. Even Mr Lee, presiding over the fat-cat economy of Singapore, predicts lean days. Governments see their finances collapsing. Economically, the international monetary and credit system is walking along the precipice of a major collapse, from which it has so far been preserved by a tacit agreement to pretend that a number of governments, major banks, major corporations and other enterprises, are not bankrupt: for in the ordinary sense of accountancy many of them are. The international economy may still, as in 1931-2, fall over that precipice. Politically the world once again finds itself torn by apparently uncontrollable conflicts which look like bringing it closer to a third world war. What is more, capitalism and its governments have no policy for overcoming these enormous problems which seems plausible or practicable. The confident chorus of the economists, those theologians of an age which believes in statistics rather than Providence, has fallen silent.

So why no shift to the Left?

Ought we not therefore to expect a major shift towards the Left, and especially towards the Socialists, whose claim that capitalism cannot manage its contradictions now sounds much more convincing than it has done for a long time? Do we even need much theoretical analysis to tell us that capitalism is not keeping its promises? But there has been no major shift. In the extreme case of Britain — which is only a more dramatic version of the troubled state of the Left elsewhere — the Labour Party is so disrupted, demoralised and on the defensive that most of its members act as though they had written off the chance of defeating a government which has visibly pushed the country deeper into a spectacular economic depression and is unparalleled for its reactionary views and economic failures. Other major parties of

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the socialist and communist Left are hardly happy about their present state either. Nor can the smaller groups of the various ultra-lefts be said to flourish, whether or not they try to recruit mass support. As always a few exceptions can undoubtedly be found, swallows which alone do not, alas, make a summer. Thus the encouraging advance of the Workers' Party in the Irish Republic cannot change the generally discouraging picture.

The only evident advances of the international Left in recent years underline this general failure to confront and draw strength from the crisis of capitalism. They are the movement against nuclear war and for environmental improvements (the 'green' movements which are of greater political significance at present on the continent than in Britain).

Both are certainly initiated by the political Left, though both, in different ways, cut across the old political dividing lines, insofar as they are *alternatives* to confronting the crisis. This is not so clear in the case of the peace movement, partly because it is plainly a response to the increasingly menacing international situation which is one aspect of the global capitalist crisis, partly because these movements have not set themselves up in rivalry with the political Left, which provides them with the main body of their support. However, the recent debate around what seems to be EP Thompson's thesis that the main political issue is not capitalism or socialism but the fight against 'exterminism', suggests that there are potential tensions here. One hopes they can be relaxed.

> Even Dallas' JR is not likely to welcome oil-drilling on his ranch, especially by somebody else

Such tensions are more obvious in the 'green' movements, since some of these have set themselves up as political parties which weaken the Left (eg in Germany, the Social Democrats), by diverting part of its support to themselves. Moreover, 'green' movements have much less relation to the present crisis of capitalism than to the present fragmentation of the international Left. In any case, improving the environment — which we must all support — is a programme equally directed in principle against capitalist business which opposes it in the name of profit, and planners (including socialist ones) who oppose it in the name of raising output, creating jobs or on some other grounds. Conversely, specific ecological campaigns are quite likely to be supported by the prosperous middle classes whose interest as consumers lies in unpolluted nature, far from motorways, smog, nuclear power stations and mass tourism, even though this may conflict with the interests of some of its members as business entrepreneurs. Even Dallas' JR is not likely to welcome oil-drilling on his ranch, especially by somebody else.

What the Left can't offer

Nevertheless, both the peace and ecology movements belong to the Left, and have shown a good deal of dynamism. But what they do not reflect, except very indirectly indeed, is any mass response to the economic failures and social problems of capitalism in its time of crisis. There is such a mass response, at least passively. A recent Italian public opinion poll shows that the percentage of citizens who expect a solution from revolution is as large today (26% in both cases) as that which expects anything from the existing parties. (*The Times* Aug 9 1982). But they do not seem to expect such a change from the parties of the Left.

For, unlike the 1930s, the Left today can neither point to an alternative society immune to the crisis (as the USSR seemed to be) nor to any concrete policies which hold much promise for overcoming it in the short term (as Keynesian or similar policies seemed to promise then). Unlike the 1930s the socialist economies suffer from crises of their own, sometimes very acutely, and, in a number of cases, are themselves so interlocked with the world economy as to be vulnerable to the crisis of international capitalism. Moreover, while the free-market policies of Thatcherites and Reaganites are patently failing — we have not heard any cries of triumph lately from Professor Milton Friedmann — the most obvious short term alternative, a return to some form of neo-Keynesian expansionism, offers only modest prospects at the moment. For the immediate future the Left can offer to defend men and women against the combined ravages of economic depression and the reactionary inhumanity of Thatcher and Reagan. In the longer term it has very much more to offer. What it cannot promise with much plausibility is a quick and certain solution to the crisis, such as seemed available 50 years ago. This undoubtedly deprives it of some of its potential appeal.

A longer term view

This disappointing situation of the Left in the midst of a great opportunity must be seen against the background of difficulties which have developed over a much longer period. The core of the Left, since the decline of nineteenth century Liberalism, consisted, and still largely consists, of the working class parties and labour movements which developed on a massive scale in most of Europe before the First World War, splitting into Social Democratic and Communist parties after the October Revolution. They grew up essentially as proletarian parties, a tendency intensified in the Communist parties after 1917. That is to say, while also attracting — and seeking to attract — support from other strata and groups (for instance intellectuals), they were primarily based on manual wage-earners, heavily preoccupied with the specific demands of this class, and they expected to achieve their triumph over capitalism essentially through the action of the working class. They saw this class as inevitably growing in numbers and socialist class consciousness, as inevitably destined by history to rise and triumph, carrying with it the rest of the people, except for a steadily diminishing number of capitalist exploiters. And, in fact, such parties grew and became mass forces, and attracted support from non-workers, inasmuch as they were seen as representing all that was progressive, and no other major parties existed around whom the alliance of workers and other progressive forces could rally. To this extent their historical confidence did not seem misplaced.

Obviously the split between reformists and revolutionaries, anticipated before 1914 but formally institutionalised after the October Revolution, complicated matters by dividing these movements, except in some countries where either the Social Democrats, or more rarely the new Communists, enjoyed the virtual monopoly of mass support. Nevertheless, the ability of a united working class movement to act as mobiliser and leader of other classes and progressive forces was even more clearly demonstrated in the period of anti-fascism between 1934 and 1947. The large movements of anti-fascist unity were not merely formed round the nucleus of the Labour movements, nor did they only express the need to unite against the threat which fascism posed for the entire Left, from liberal democrats to communists. They also mobilised for major social changes, for the hope of a new and better society, under the leadership and slogans of the parties of the working class. That, after all, is why Labour in 1945 rallied so great a wave of by no means only proletarian support. That victory over fascism failed to lead to the expected new society, or where it did, produced disappointment as well as achievement, is another question. It was still possible to have some confidence in the historically inevitable rise of labour, which would eventually overcome capital-

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photo: Frank Spooner Pictures

Environmentalists and police in confrontation during the campaign to prevent expansion of Frankfurt airport.

ism. The argument was not about this, but about the strategy and tactics of labour movements, and whether the leaders of some actually still wanted to overcome capitalism.

A picture of change

This is no longer such a plausible prospect. The late Rab Butler records in his memoirs that Aneurin Bevan told him in the 1930s, 'You represent a declining class: I represent a rising class.' It is not easy to imagine many young working class militants expressing such opinions with genuine conviction today. The manual working class, core of traditional socialist labour parties, is today contracting and not expanding. It has been transformed, and to some extent divided, by the decades when its standard of living reached levels undreamed of even by the well-paid in 1939. It can no longer be assumed that all workers are on the way to recognising that their class situation must align them behind a socialist workers party, though there are still many millions who believe this. In Britain today a large sector of the 'affluent' or skilled workers, once the strongest supporters of Labour, are today politically unstable, as public opinion polls and electoral analyses demonstrate.

Furthermore, the ability of the traditional working class parties to rally round them broad alliance for progress has been weakened, as has, unfortunately, their own internal cohesion. The situation of the classical parties of this kind, both social-democratic and communist, reflects these difficulties. Often they can still rely on a great deal of traditional support, but in many respects they live on the accumulated political capital of the past. And, insofar as they represent exclusively or primarily the sectional interests of organised workers — which of course, they must represent — they face more complex problems than in the past.

Thus the traditional Social Democratic Parties (we shall consider the novel phenomenon of 'neo-socialist' or 'Eurosocialist' parties below) have almost all lost some ground, even where, as in Scandinavia, they were the automatic parties of government for some forty years. What is more, even where they once rested on the solid loyalty and faith of a labour *movement*, the ties which bound the workers to them have loosened, especially among the younger generation. This is very much the case in one of the rare countries where such a party is still, or can be expected to be, singlehanded in government, eg Austria. The situation of such parties whose support has been slowly eroding, is not usually as critical as the Labour Party's affairs have become in recent years, but the general tendency is not in doubt. Indeed we have seen some such parties split (as by the nationalist quarrels in Belgium) or collapse, as the old French Socialist Party did until it was reconstructed on a new base in the early 1970s by Mitterrand.

Communist parties

The situation of the Communist parties is complicated by their very varying situation in different countries, and by the fragmentation of the international communist movement in the past 25 years. They fall into three groups: small parties which, while sometimes significant forces in the labour movements of their countries, play a minor role in politics, mass parties since at least 1945, and new parties which entered legality in the 1970s as potential or actual mass parties.

The situation of the small parties varies so widely that it is impossible to generalise about them. The Swedish, Dutch, Belgian and Austrian parties have little in common except being small. What little could be said about the British CP in the context of a very general article, would in any case be familar to readers of *Marxism Today*.

The older mass Communist parties succeeded in the difficult task of holding most of their influence, and working class loyalty, during the prosperity decades. In Italy they even extended it slowly. But they could not be content with the status of a large, but apparently permanent minority which doomed them to survive in a sort of political ghetto; and they failed, on the whole, to break out of it. Indeed, in France the CP entered a period of considerable difficulties and markedly declining support in the 1970s. Though it is in government today, it is at present a junior partner of a revived Socialist Party, a situation which would have seemed inconceivable in 1970. The Italian CP has a less discouraging record. Indeed in the mid-70s it looked as though it had actually succeeded in decisively widening its mass support among a people fed up with a particularly incompetent, inactive and corrupt political régime. However, the impetus of this major breakthrough was not maintained, though some of the advances of those years have not been lost, particularly in regional and local government. Since then the Italian CP has also been slowly retreating, fighting to maintain its admittedly strong positions rather than expecting immediately to resume its advance. Neither party has succeeded in turning the crisis of capitalism to its advantage so far. Why they failed cannot be investigated here.

Of the new mass parties, the Portuguese, having failed to establish decisive revolutionary power in conjunction with the military revolt of 1974, seems to have settled down as a solid party based on the working class, representing about 15% of the electorate, rather like the French and Italian parties of the 50s and 60s. The Spanish CP, which entered legality with the prestige of its unparalleled resistance record and at the head of a fighting union movement built up under Franco, established itself as a strong force in some regions, but has since virtually collapsed under its internal divisions. The latest polls suggest that its electorate has mostly abandoned it.

This rapid sketch suggests that the tradi-

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tional socialist or communist working class parties cannot rely on either the slump or on long term tendencies of social and political development to guarantee automatic progress. It even suggests that such parties can no longer always rely on maintaining their solid traditional support. They will have to find new ways of mobilising their peoples for a better society.

The rise of new-style parties

How then are the advances of the political Left in the past ten years to be explained? Let us look at one interesting and ambiguous development: parties which have grown, sometimes with great and unexpected rapidity. Most of these can be described as 'neo-socialist' or 'Eurosocialist' parties. They are in effect *new* parties, either because they did not previously exist (like PASOK, which today forms the government of Greece), or because they were built on the ruins of traditional working-class socialist parties which had virtually gone out of business (as in France) or had only a paper existence (as in Spain). Today the new French Socialist Party, after winning the greatest triumph of any single party in the history of the French Left, dominates the government of France, and the Spanish Socialist Party may well —if the army lets it — preside over the next government of Spain.

These new parties mainly belong to the Left (though one has considerable reservations about some, eg the Portugese Socialists), and some of them — in spite of growing largely in competition against the Communists — are committed to the united action of all the Left, including notably the Communists. This is obviously the case in France, where both Socialists and Communists form the government. However, the point is that, whatever we may think about them, they demonstrate the potential power of the Left to rally a majority of the people. In the case of the two most successful among them (Greece and France), they have mobilised sufficient support for electoral victory on the basis of a radical left wing programme. Thus in France Mitterrand won both the presidency and a decisive parliamentary majority by offering a programme which, at least on paper, is probably more radical than that of the Labour Left at present. To this extent there are lessons to be learned from these experiences.

Popular coalitions

These new parties are not so much mass parties of the old type, supported by an organised *movement*, and still less parties of organised workers: the neo-socialists have tended to lose what organic connection with the workers their predecessors had. They are rather groups of politicians raising electoralibanners under which a wide and heterogeneous range of discontented voters can be brought together. This has advantages and drawbacks. On the plus side they can have an extremely wide appeal, and hope to mobilise not only people disappointed with their old political affiliations, but the hitherto non-political, and find room for a variety of interests. On the minus side, their support may lack cohesion and fluctuate rapidly, and their leadership may have no policy (other than getting into office). In the worst cases they may merely redistribute the forces of a split and disillusioned Left in their favour, without extending much beyond it. They may even — in the absence of a sufficiently large and firm social base — opt for recruitment in the centre and on the right.

However, one might observe secondly, that they tend to be drawn towards a Left alignment. The rise of President Mitterrand illustrates the reasons for this clearly, since this very able politician recognised the logic of his enterprise with unusual clarity. In the first place victory depended on mobilising all possible support against a reactionary and anti-democratic regime which was unpopular *as such*, and not only because it also seemed in its last years to be unable to cope with its economic troubles. It depended on mobilising the forces of progress against reaction and corruption. The most striking examples of Left advance in the past ten years have occurred in such circumstances.

The first conclusion, which unfortunately needs restating, is that unity is strength

The French experience

In the second place the success of this mobilisation depended on *uniting* opposition, not only because it is good strategy to concentrate forces against one target, but also because the very fact of unity is itself a powerful force, which can mobilise people who may neither understand nor be much interested in, the issues which divide the forces allied against the same enemy. (Conversely, in France, the régime of President Giscard was badly weakened by the division between his supporters and the old Gaullists). In the third place unity is a particularly powerful instinct in that part of the Left represented by the working class movement; and for good reasons. Without such unity victory was inconceivable. With it, it was less difficult than it seemed. For in France, and for that matter in most of the rest of Europe, even in bad times, the political forces of the Left (in its broadest sense) are fairly evenly balanced against those of the Right, and relatively small shifts of support can give it the preponderance. Often, indeed, they *are* the majority, though this is concealed by internal divisions. Thus even today in Britain the majority of potential voters are opposed to the Conservatives.

The victory of the Left in France was won by unity. Against both sections of his own party and leaders of the Communist Party, Mitterrand insisted on the unity between Socialists and Communists around which alone the full potential of the progressive vote could be mobilised, because unity alone promised victory. And even after his party had won a single-handed majority in Parliament, he insisted on bringing Communists into the government, for unity is the best safeguard against that crumbling of support which easily threatens progressive governments. And though the French government faces severe economic problems, which are not likely to disappear quickly, it has in its first year carried out a large part of its programme. But what it has shown above all is that the Left can regain the initiative, mobilise a majority of the people for a radical programme, and win.

Some conclusions.

What conclusions can be drawn about the state and prospects of the Left in Europe from the experience of the past ten years?

The first conclusion, which unfortunately needs restating in spite of being obvious, is that unity is strength. Without it, the Right cannot be defeated. A divided Left, and especially a divided socialist Left, will not advance. It is far more likely to tear itself apart to the benefit of the Right.

A second conclusion would suggest that the role and perspectives of the traditional Socialist/Communist working class parties in the fight for a better society, require some careful reconsideration. These parties, singly or jointly, are still the core of the Left, and often by far its strongest organised component. Their capacity to be its leading force is not, in principle, to be doubted. But in practice they have not generally shown an ability to mobilise the entire potential support for democracy and for a better society. This is indicated by the fact that other organised forces on the Left have appeared, and play a significant and sometimes dominant political role.

We have already noted the appearance of the 'neo-socialist' parties, which are not working class parties in the traditional sense.

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Moreover, a good deal of the Left now consists of movements and special campaign organisations pursuing particular objects such as peace or ecological improvement, or the interests of special sectors of the people, such as, most notably, women, which may overlap with the traditional Left or be allied with it, but have an existence separate from its traditional parties and refuse to be identified only with them. Some such special interests or groups have actually organised their own separate parties which are in competition with the traditional Left, as in the case of some 'green' parties and some regionalist or nationalist movements. Conversely, some traditional parties have probably tended to narrow their appeal by concentrating, in practice, on the special concerns of the workers organised in unions or other sectional groups of the working class. This must, naturally, remain an essential task of working class parties, but experience has shown that, say, concentrating on union militancy alone does not nekcessarily generate a broad political advance of the Left, or even political radicalisation in the working class as a whole.

Unwise to generalise

A third conclusion is that neither the long term social and political developments nor the short term crisis of the world economy, *automatically* favour the Left today. Whether they do or not depends on its political action. Fortunately for it, the situation does not *automatically* favour its opponents either. Capitalism is plainly incapable in the short term of overcoming its present crisis. Its internal and international contradictions are more clearly visible. Moreover, unlike 50 years ago, it has not so far found a political strategy against the Left as effective as fascism was then. Nobody, especially in Britain, will underestimate the potential of the politics of the radical Right, but its weaknesses should not be underestimated either. Three years after Hitler took power in Germany, unemployment had been largely liquidated; three years after Mrs Thatcher came into office, it has reached the highest figure ever recorded in this country. Reaction so far — except where it has relied on straight military regimes — has relied on splitting the Left, not without assistance from the Left, rather than destroying it.

> Parties are no longer so firmly rooted in 'the movement'

Another conclusion follows from what has just been said. At present it may not be realistic to generalise about the prospects of the Left for the whole of non-socialist Europe. Unlike the 1930s, which saw a general advance of fascism or the 1940s which saw a general advance of the Left growing out of anti-fascism and resistance, there are today no equally clear continent-wide trends. There are merely possibilities. The situation of the main parties of the Left, on which its prospects must depend, varies enormously. Some Socialist parties are in government; alone, in combination with Communist or other parties, or as minor parts of bourgeois coalitions. Some (as in France) can look forward to several years in which to face their problems, others (as in West Germany) are visibly weakening. Others are in opposition with or without good or even any prospects of winning elections, but their future is variable. While the Swedish Socialists, if they need to rely on anyone, would almost certainly seek for the support of the Communists, it is anybody's guess what, if anything, the Spanish Socialist Party would want to or be able to do. Some are gaining, others losing ground, and in both cases internal fragmentation may weaken the Left as a whole, or its major parties, to a greater or lesser extent. While it is reasonable to assess the prospects of the Left concretely for each country, there is little sense in looking for general trends.

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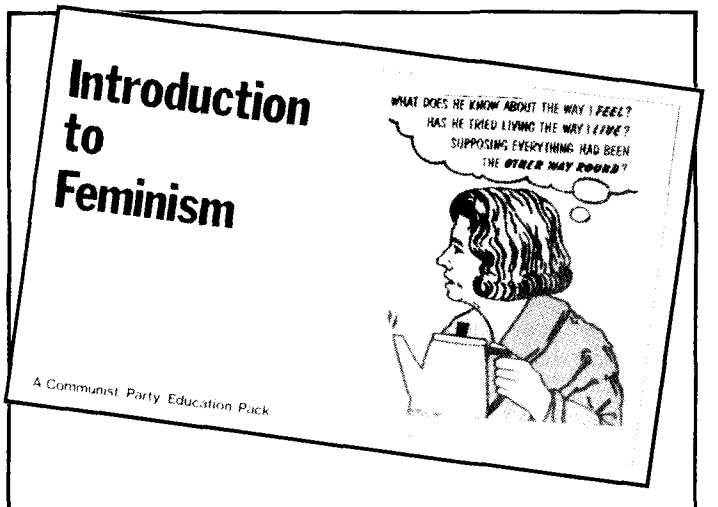
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Nostalgia will change nothing

However, as distinct from the prospects of the Left, it is possible to generalise about its situation. It is, as we have seen, more fragmented than it used to be. The problem is how to unite these fragments — parties of the old kind and of the new kind, special interest parties, independent campaigning movements, so as to mobilise the full potential of the Left, and those who can be inspired by it to hope for a better future. While that *potential* support is immense, has certainly not diminished, and may well be growing, the actual support for the main parties of the Left, old and new, has shown considerable volatility. Probably more so than in the past. Even the oldest of the mass parties can no longer always rely on holding the bulk of their traditional supporters, and still less the mass of newly politicised or re-politicised citizens who may from time to time flock to their banners. The social basis of their support has changed, generally becoming more heterogeneous, and the strong organic links which bound their traditional supporters — especially the workers — to them, have been loosened. Parties are no longer so firmly rooted in 'the movement'. This weakening of strong and committed mass organisations linking the ranks with their leadership is evident both when the Left is in government (and notably in France) and where it is not. It is not enough to deplore the decline of 'the movement' from the great old days, whenever the militants situate them (General Strike, the time of Maurice Thorez, Togliatti or Vienna in the 1920s). Nostalgia will not bring them back. They have gone for good. We must build on the foundations of the past, but the building must be new. This situation is common to the Left throughout Europe, and certainly to the socialist Left.

To utilise the possibilities before the Left is not easy. Its forces are divided, and their leadership is unreliable. Some of the old Social Democratic parties have been content to administer the existing mixed economies in a liberal spirit, but few such economies are still prosperous enough to allow them to do even this without problems. It is by no means clear what else they aim to do. Some of the neo-socialist parties have been primarily concerned with building themselves up as candidates for office by any means available, and it is sometimes by no means clear what their leaders represent, other than, say, a handsome face with great public relations potential or a particularly formidable and unscrupulous political manipulator. Both kinds of socialist party belong to the Left (as indeed do most British Social Democrats) and all have left wings within them, but leadership is not to be expected from them, though it may, as in the case of Mitterrand, emerge in such quarters. The special interest campaigns, parties and groups inevitably concentrate too much on their particular fields to provide or even sometimes to aim at leadership for the broad political advance. The Left in Socialist parties, which has sometimes captured decisive influence in them, has often failed to be aware of the need for broad unity, or of the danger of narrowing the appeal of their parties. The record of Communist parties, complicated by their own internal and international problems, has been uneven and sometimes disappointing. It is difficult to deny that the leadership of, say, the French, Italian and Spanish CPs have taken some mistaken decisions in the past ten years, for which they are still paying.

So where do we look?

Nevertheless, if the initiative to unite for advance and the leadership in that advance is to be expected from any quarter, it is from the Marxists. Not from the Marxism which is exhausted in a few agitational phrases or a few simplified formulas and denunciations, but from the Marxism whose strength lies in the realistic analysis of the historical situation, the developments in capitalism — and socialism — and the actual state of the movement, however unexpected or unprecedented. The Left today cannot simply set out to replay the past, this time avoiding its errors. The game and pitch are no longer the same, nor are the teams. It cannot rely simply on the resources or, for that matter, the slogans it has inherited from the past. The old resources alone are no longer sufficient and not all the old slogans have the same meaning as they once had. It would be too much to say that the great potential reserves of the Left only wait to be mobilised if unity can be achieved and leadership provided. The situation is much too complicated and difficult for inspirational rhetoric. But the resources are great, they are there, and they can be mobilised. But it is probable that in the course of doing so the Left, and especially the socialist Left, will find that it has changed its style, form and structure. For it will represent not only a working class which is different from that it once mobilised, but also other social strata, and groups whose interest in replacing a capitalist society (not to mention in the survival of the human race) is today not inferior or less urgent than the workers'. □

c. Eric Hobsbawm 1982

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Kenneth Leech

IS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND REALLY MOVING TO THE LEFT?

'For heaven's sake, hands off the Church of England!' cried an MP during the debates on the revised Prayer Book of 1928. 'It's the only thing that stands between us and Christianity.' Today, according to the *Daily Express*, that church is involved in a 'drift to socialism', and the danger of disestablishment therefore looms high.[1] In recent weeks the spate of writing, and of utterances from Tory MPs, on the alleged left wing shift of the Church of England has reached at times bizarre proportions. What is the background to this extraordinary phase?

A series of unconnected incidents has combined in recent weeks to induce an almost unparalleled manifestation of fury from those who have discerned a leftward shift in the Church, or at least a widening gulf between the Church and the values and policies of the present government. There was the Falkland Islands service, with the debate which preceded it. It was well known that there was a desire in government circles for a 'victory-service', and that many voices in the churches were hostile to this idea. In the event, the Church won. Denis Thatcher was quoted as saying that 'the Boss' (the Prime Minister, not God!) was 'hopping mad' while another version spoke of her 'spitting blood'.[2]

The few days after the service on 26 July saw reports of violent attacks from the right wing of the Tory Party. Sir John Biggs-Davison spoke of 'cringing clergy' who were 'misusing' St. Paul's to call the war into question.[3] Julian Amery called the service disgraceful and complained specifically of the absence of martial hymns such as 'Fight the good fight' and 'Onward Christian soldiers'.[4] The Archbishop's sermon came under heavy fire, because, while the first few paragraphs contained a strong expression of support for government policy, there was a strong attack on the arms race, and criticism of those who wished to 'wheel up God to endorse some particular policy or attitude rather than another'.

National anthem

Scarcely had the controversy died down than an innocuous hymn book, produced by a group of fairly conservative evangelicals, was the subject of attack because it contained a new version of the national anthem in which 'Send her victorious' was replaced by 'Guard us in liberty'. In fact most of the critics failed to notice that the old version was published alongside it, and John Stokes, Tory MP for Halesowen, complained, 'It is typical of the trend among some bishops and clergy. These people are ashamed of being born Englishmen and are full of guilt and want to water down everything they can.'[5] In fact, the compilers of the book did not come from the political Left, or even from the radical wing at all. Lord Cranborne, Tory MP for Dorset South, complained that the Church of England was now 'peopled by buffoons, rather like social democrats.'[6]

A few days later, a report of a working party on nuclear disarmament was leaked by two papers, and the anger reached a new climax. Clergy should stick to 'souls and sin', advised John Stokes, and leave 'matters temporal' such as disarmament to parliament.[7] The list of utterances provoked by the various incidents is long, amusing and revealing. Perhaps the most eccentric was an article by Tony Dawe in the *Daily Express* on 17 August entitled 'The bishops rocking the Church to its foundations' which claimed that concern with race, disarmament and the Third World was replacing 'the Glory of God and his relevance to our lives', attacked Dr Runcie for preaching 'a sermon on the morals of war' instead of 'thanking God for our victory' and spoke of 'allegations of a "Militant-Tendency"-style take over of Church committees.' It ended with the warning that disestablishment might be the result of the 'Church's drift to the left.'

> the danger of disestablishment looms high

In fact, the unease among some Conservatives with the Church of England goes back some years. In recent years there had been criticisms of government policy over immigration, child benefits, housing, nationality and a number of other issues. In 1978, after Mrs Thatcher's notorious TV interview about immigration, Eldon Griffiths, MP for Bury St. Edmunds, attacked some of the bishops who had criticised her. 'Is it any wonder that some of our cathedrals are empty if those who preach in them are so out of touch with what large numbers of British people are thinking and saying?'[8] Two years later *The Guardian* claimed that the Ministry of Housing was trying to persuade Dr. Runcie 'to stop the Anglican Church's public criticism of the housing cuts.'[9] The strong opposition to the Nationality Bill from both the House of Bishops and the General Synod was known to cause serious concern in Whitehall. Throughout the period, some politicians were stating their own view of the Church's role. It was primarily spiritual, said Patrick Jenkin, who went on to express anxiety that the Church was now exerting political pressure over child poverty.[10] Clifford Longley of *The Times*, commenting on Mrs Thatcher, noted 'the gulf between her conception of the Church's duty and their own.'[11]

More political

In fact, it is certainly true that during the 1970s the Church of England as an institution, through its synods, boards and working parties took political issues with an increasing degree of seriousness and sophistication. A simplistic interpretation of this sees it simply as a capitulation to 'trendiness' (an umbrella term covering an enormous range of views), to 'liberalism' and to the 'spirit of the age'. A more serious and informed approach will see it as a conscientious grappling with political realities, informed by Christian theology and the study of the available data.

A recent study of *The Church of England and Politics*[12] has surveyed the Church's political involvement in six areas — race and community relations; men, women and sex; health and sickness; violence, peace and war; work, industry and prosperity; the political process itself. There are other important areas where considerable expertise has been built up. While one should not exaggerate the changes, it is clear that the involvement in political issues by the Church, nationally and locally, is very considerable, and this is not seen as a kind of 'dabbling', or an alter-

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native to religion, but a direct result of taking Christian faith seriously.

It is, of course, impossible to make sense of the 'radicalisation' (if that is what it is) of the Church of England without seeing it as part of a worldwide shift in the Christian world. For the Roman Catholic Church, the 2nd Vatican Council, the 3rd Synod of Bishops (1971) and the years of Popes John XXIII and Paul VI were a period of major development. Gregory Baum has said that in this period 'the Catholic Church's official position has shifted to the left.'[13] The involvement of Roman Catholic theologians and pastors in the struggles in South and Central America has been of great importance here. In the non-Roman world, the work of the World Council of Churches, particularly through its Programme to Combat Racism, has brought churches into direct relationship with liberation movements and political struggles. The world-wide Anglican Consultative Council, meeting in Kenya in 1971, urged Anglicans to support the PCR, arguing that it was the most important thing the WCC had done in its entire history.

Class composition

The Church of England cannot therefore be seen in isolation from these developments. In some way it is less radical than other parts of the Anglican communion. Unlike most Anglican churches, it is established. It is also the only part of the Anglican communion in which the bulk of the membership is lapsed. Thus the Episcopal Church in the USA contains only about 2% of the population but is very wealthy and influential. It is a minority church, its members clearly identifiable.

The Church of England is theoretically a national church. In fact its strength lies in the upper and middle classes, and it is very weak in working class communities and in the inner city. The class basis of the Church is crucial in considering the social and political positions taken up by the General Synod. Thus a study of the Synod of 1975 showed that 99% were middle class, 79% of them upper middle class. However, there were significant variations in their attitudes from the prevailing attitude in the general public of the same class groups (A and B). For example, 78% of Synod members opposed more nationalisation while 85% of the general middle class public did so. But on the abolition of the death penalty, only 22% of the Synod were opposed, contrasted with 77% of the general public. 29%, as against 80% thought there were too many immigrants.[14] On the issues broadly construed as 'moral', (race, penal affairs, sexual ethics), members took a broadly 'left of centre' view; on more distinctly political and economic questions (nationalisation, wealth, investments, and so on) they were distinctly more cautious and conservative.

It is misleading then to speak simply of a 'drift to socialism' in the institutional Church, and more correct to speak of a broadly liberal perspective, certainly to the left of this Government. However, the evidence suggests that the Synod is considerably more radical than the Church at the local level, especially in the suburbs where the *Daily Telegraph* is likely to be the newspaper of the average, committed Anglican layperson. It is also possible that the clergy in many areas are more inclined to take a 'leftish' stance than the laypeople, but the pattern is too varied and complex for easy generalisations.

Anglican Left

There is, of course, a strong, committed and vigorous left wing movement within the Church of England. It has been there for over a century. The history of the Anglican Left is a fascinating study. It includes the Guild of St Matthew, formed in Bethnal Green in 1877, the first explicitly socialist group in England; the explicitly Marxist group, the Catholic Crusade, which gathered around Conrad Noel at Thaxted between 1918-36; the Society of Socialist Clergy and Ministers, of which the late Hewlett Johnson and Canon Stanley Evans were leading members. For a period from the beginning of the 20th century to the death of Archbishop Temple in 1944, socialist ideas made considerable impact on the Church, including many bishops and clergy. But these groups were never a majority, and today the organized Left within the Church is very small, though there has been a clear revival in recent years. Anglican involvement in anti-racist activity, in the peace movement, and in many other areas is considerable. The point is that *in percentage terms*, this activity involves only a fraction of the membership of the Church.

What does seem clear is that Marxist theory has made little significant impact on

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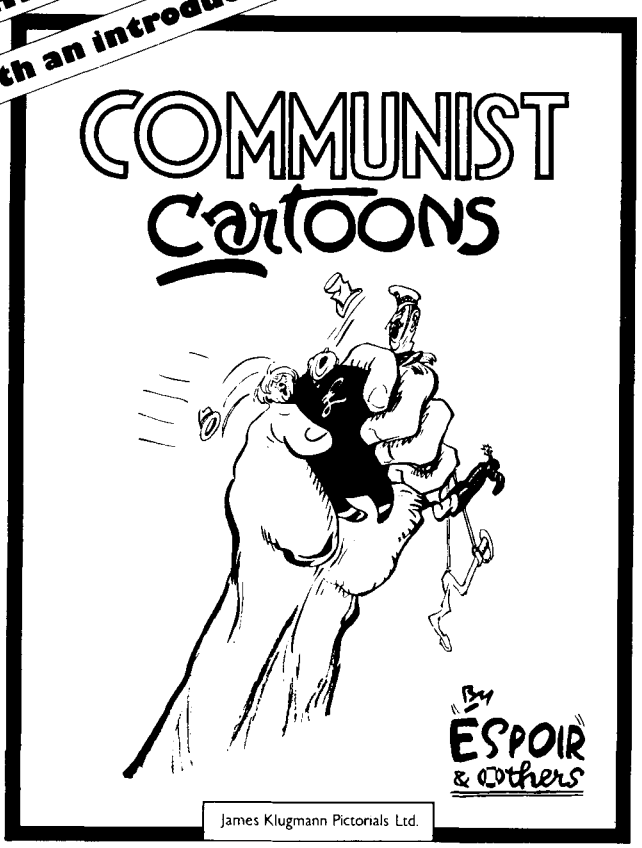

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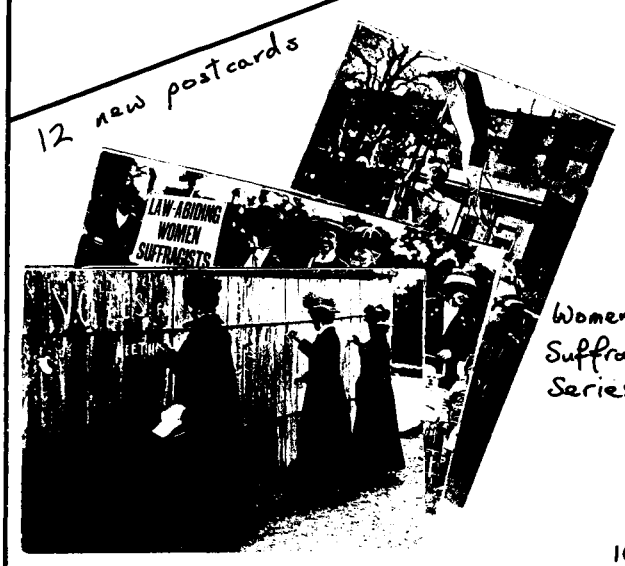

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recent Anglican thought and action. In some respects, Marxism was more influential on sections of the Church of England in the interwar years, and the Catholic Crusade was deeply involved in, and split over, the Stalin-Trotsky issue. Like the secular Left, Anglican socialists were in disarray after Hungary and the 20th Congress. Anglicans are almost totally absent from the revolutionary Left, though there has probably been an increase in recent years in Anglican clergy joining the Labour Party. However, the SDP has obvious attractions to Anglicans with their distrust of extremes, of dogma, and their concern for 'moderation'. On the other hand, the influence of Latin American theology has led some to grapple with Marxist analyses in relation to Christian theology. But this should not be exaggerated: most Anglicans have never read a word of Marx any more than most 'Christian Socialists' of the past did.

What is it?

The 'drift to the left' in the Church of England should not be overstated. It is greater than most socialists think, and considerably less than the *Daily Express* believes! There is, however, likely to be a continued revival of socialist thought in the Church. It will be affected by such things as the clear growth of the anti-nuclear movement in all the churches; the progress of the work for racial justice; the influence of feminism on Christian thinking; the dialogue with the radical wing of the Roman communion; the influence of Third World theology. But, at the end of the day, the crucial question is not about what the Church of England *says*, but about whose *interests* it represents. This is

photo Barry Lewis/Network

the real issue behind the recent controversies. Is the Church of England primarily the religious wing of the state? If not, which elements in English society does it represent? In the preface to the 1867 edition of *Capital*, Marx suggested that the Church of England would be more prepared to lose thirty-eight of its Thirty-Nine Articles than one thirty-ninth of its income. Today the Church is significantly less dependent on inherited wealth, and more on the support of its members.

It is in this area, of the reflection of socio-political attitudes in financial commitment, that the process of radicalisation is less easy to discern. The most one can say is that the era of Constantine, of established churches in allegedly 'Christian' states, is coming to an end, and it is likely that the effects of this will be felt increasingly on the Church of England as by law established in the coming years. □

[1] Tony Dawe, 'The Bishops rocking the Church to its foundations.' *Daily Express*, 17 August 1982.
[2] *The Times* and *The Guardian*, 27 and 28 July 1982.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] Cited in *The Church Times*, 30 July 1982.
[5] Cited *The Times*, 2 August 1982.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Cited *The Church of England Newspaper*, 6 August 1982.
[8] Cited *The Guardian*, 27 February 1978.
[9] *Ibid* 4 December 1980.
[10] Credo, LWT, 11 May 1980.
[11] *The Times*, 9 March 1981.
[12] Giles Ecclestone, *The Church of England and Politics* (Church Information Office 1981).
[13] *The Social Imperative* (New York, Paulist Press 1979) p84.
[14] Kenneth Medhurst and George Moyser, 'The political organisation of the middle class: the case of the Church of England', *Papers in Religion and Politics* (Department of Government, University of Manchester, Summer 1977).

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John Minnion

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The Atlantic Alliance in Disarray

The days of the old 'Atlantic' system are over — *Four Western Foreign Policy Institutes*[1]

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The decision by President Reagan to prohibit European subsidiaries and licensees of American firms to deliver components for the Soviet-European gas pipeline brought long simmering conflicts within the Atlantic Alliance to a head and into the headlines. Moreover, the pipeline decision was taken only days after implicit American promises not to do so at the June 1982 Western economic summit at Versailles and NATO summit at Bonn, and it provoked the resignation of Secretary of State Alexander Haig in protest. The Europeans sent several ministerial delegations to the United States to protest against the violation of their sovereignty and on his American tour West German chancellor Helmut Schmidt demanded the retraction of the decision and the limitation of the damage already done to Atlantic Alliance relations.

This article examines the growing disarray and discontent within the Atlantic Alliance, of which the pipeline issue is an expression, and the transformation of the balance of power between Europe and America, especially in the economic field.

The background and causes of these changes should be sought in the long run development of the world economy, its apparently regular long waves of economic growth alternating with relative stagnation or crisis, and the tendency for hegemonic powers to decline first relatively and then absolutely —economically, politically, militarily and financially more or less in that order — in the course of successive crises and to be replaced by others who are more successful in adjusting to the exigencies and opportunities of renewed world economic crisis.

A related fundamental background if not cause of the shifts in world political economic power and international relations is the current world economic crisis, in which unemployment in the West doubled to 15 million from the 1967 to the 1973-75 recessions and then doubled again through the 1979-82 recession to 30 million today.

Briefly, it appears that the world capitalist economy — but with very far-reaching repercussions also in the socialist ones — has since about 1967 entered another of its periodically recurrent major crises of overaccumulation of capital, in which profits, investment and economic and productivity growth rates decline or even turn negative and the most far-reaching economic, political and social transformations must occur to lay the basis for a possible renewed period of expansion, such as that of the two post World War II decades. The last such crisis period lasted from 1914 to 1945 and included two world wars, two major socialist revolutions, the intervening Great Depression of the 1930s, the rise of fascism, and the final replacement of British by American hegemony. In this and previous such crises, the degree of capitalist competition became more acute as the growth of the world economic pie shrank and political relations sharpened and led to war. As the present crisis deepens, international political-economic tensions mount and war becomes an increasing threat again.

Decline of the US

Within the West, the balance of power and competitive rivalries are highly affected by the *difference* in growth rates of output and especially of productivity among the major Western economies. Over the post war period, the strongest and oldest economies, the United States and Britain, have had the lowest growth rates of both output and productivity. Until 1973, productivity in the major continental European economies grew at nearly 6% or almost twice as fast as the about 3% annual growth in the United States (and 3.8% in Britain); and in Japan productivity rose at 10% per year, or nearly twice as fast again as in continental Europe, or over three times as fast as in the United States. When all the growth rates of output and productivity declined after 1973, Japan experienced the greatest absolute decline to 3.6% and the United States the greatest relative decline to less than 1% annual growth of productivity since 1973 and an absolute *decline* of productivity since 1978; while European growth rates only declined by less than half to over 3% (and 1.8% in Britain). Thus, as all of the economies slowed down, the Japanese lost their commanding lead in the productivity race over the Europeans, although both of them retained much of their lead over the United States (Data from AEI *Economist*, May 1982). Absolutely, the United States still leads in overall productivity because of its efficient agriculture and just barely in industrial productivity, in which Japan has already overtaken Western Europe after a 45% increase from 1973 to 1979 (*Financial Times* 7 July 1982).

These changes in growth rates of output and productivity have

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been the basis of substantial modifications of relative competitiveness in the world economy and the balance of power and the degree of competition on the world market among the Western powers, which undermine the Atlantic Alliance and the previous trilateral relations of the United States and Europe with Japan.

The increasing divergences within the Atlantic Alliance may, for the sake of convenience, be classified into three major groups: (1) economic policy, primarily in the United States and secondarily in Europe and Japan; (2) trade relations and policy, with regard to each other and to third parties, especially Japan and the Third World with particular emphasis on the Middle East; and (3) East-West relations.

WESTERN CONFLICTS OVER ECONOMIC POLICY

Conflicts of interest grew in the 1960s as the dollar weakened. President Nixon took the dollar off gold on August 15, 1971 and began its effective devaluation. This measure laid the basis for a major American drive to increase exports, especially of agricultural products and military hardware, in order to restore the US balance of payments.

However, this American economic offensive was undertaken at the expense of the Japanese and the Europeans. Since their exchange rates remained effectively pegged to the dollar by the Bretton Woods (1944) and Smithsonian (1972) agreements, which exposed their economies to the vicissitudes of the American economy and dollar, on March 19, 1973 the postwar system of fixed exchange rates was abandoned and replaced by one of flexible exchange rates in which all the currencies floated up and down against each other in response to supply and demand.

However, flexible exchange rates cannot protect the national economies fully and then only at the cost of fluctuations that render all price and cost calculations insecure. The solution, which Germany bought at the cost of other economic guarantees to her major trading partners, was first the 'snake' and then the EMS or European Monetary System. The EMS is directed against the dollar essentially to protect Germany and France from the vagaries of the American economy, the dollar and US economic policy.

Developments since the early 70s have seen new areas of conflict emerge. One issue of contention was economic policy after the 1973-75 recession. Germany and Japan weathered the oil price storm by increasing their exports despite strong currencies, particularly to the OPEC Middle East and the socialist countries. As a result, they achieved a large balance of trade and some balance of payments surplus in the mid 1970s. The Americans were pursuing relatively deflationary monetary and fiscal policies, supposedly to combat inflation during and after the 1973-75 recession. Since these policies put a brake on the recovery of the world economy, the Americans began to argue that the countries with a balance of payments surplus and a lower rate of inflation should prime the economic pump through reflation — which the Americans themselves refused to do — and become the 'locomotive' to pull the world economy out of the doldrums. The Germans and Japanese resisted the American pressure and rebutted their argument with the contention that their economies are too small to serve as locomotives for the world and that any effort to do so would only lead to domestic inflation.

Reaganomics and the present recession

In the late 1970s, the growing American balance of payments deficit drove down the dollar to the increasing annoyance of the Europeans, whose competitiveness was thereby weakened. On both sides of the Atlantic, much of the reason for the American trade and payments deficit was attributed to growing and increasingly costly oil imports. The Europeans and Japanese began to demand effective restrictions of American consumption and importation of oil, though in the event American oil dependence increased rather than decreased.

The turnaround on the US balance of payments and the effects of US economic policy on Europe and Japan came not as a change of policy but from a downturn of the underlying economic cycle. In mid 1979 the long awaited recession arrived in America, soon spreading to the rest of the world. One result was that the consumption, import, price and purchase cost of oil plummeted as a worldwide oil glut replaced its supposed scarcity. The American balance of payments deficits declined through lower import demand and expenditures on oil and other commodities.

The new American administration instituted its so-called new Reaganomic monetarist and supply-side policies. However, Reaganomics — like Thatcherism before it — has not worked, especially to reduce government budget deficits, which have instead grown to estimates of between $100 and $150 billion in the US and obliged the government to borrow money on the open market thereby driving up interest rates. The American shift from negative interest rates to real interest rates of 6, 7 and up to 10% has attracted a flood of money into the dollar, whose value rose again on most foreign exchange markets; and it has obliged everybody else either to let their own currencies fall through the floor thereby feeding inflation or to follow the American suit in raising interest rates and the cost of borrowing, thereby choking off investment in an already very recessive national and world economy. Official unemployment in the industrialised OECD West rose from 17 million in 1979 to foreseeably 30 million in 1982, including about 10 million in the US and 10 million in the EEC.

The Europeans and Japanese are objecting again, this time because the American dollar and the rate of interest are too high. This issue has replaced the previous ones as the major bone of contention between the Europeans and Japanese (who witnessed an unexpected massive capital flight from the therefore weak yen to higher interest currencies) and the Americans at the 1981 Ottawa and 1982 Versailles summits and numerous confrontations in between. However, this new conflict has become meshed with a whole spectrum of others with regard to issues of international trade policy between West and West, West and South, and finally West and East, which we may examine under these titles.

WESTERN CONFLICTS OVER INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The large Japanese trade surplus with the United States and Europe, and the repeated failures of all measures so far to eliminate or significantly reduce it, are well publicised in the West. What is not usually mentioned, however, is that Japan absolutely needs such a surplus in its American and European trade to cover its unavoidably huge deficits with its Middle Eastern and Asian suppliers of oil and raw materials, on which Japan is nearly 100% import dependent, and in exchange for which these supply economies could not possibly absorb an equivalent sum of industrial imports from Japan. Therefore, the maintenance of this triangular trade relationship of deficit with the South and surplus with the West is literally a matter of life and death for Japan. No wonder then that Japanese officials and businessmen regard Western pressures to reduce the trade gap with them as the threat of a 'trade war' in which they have no choice but to defend themselves at all costs.

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[1] *Western Security: what has changed? what should be done?* (1981). An important study by 4 Western policy institutes.

This article is excerpted from the first part of a longer study on 'Atlantic Alliance to European Detente', the second part of which we hope to publish in a future issue.

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The penetration of the American market by Japanese automobiles, TV sets, photographic equipment, and a myriad of other consumer products as well as steel and now even the threat from advancing Japanese high technology in electronic components and other producer goods is well known. So is the American insistence that Japan open its market to imports of Western industrial goods and services, including banking. Less well known, except in Japan itself, are the huge Japanese imports of American agricultural products and the Japanese threats of consumer boycotts against American beef and oranges in retaliation against American pressures and complaints. However, when forced to choose among unpalatable alternatives, Japan is likely to prefer its economic and political alliance with the United States and the latter is increasingly leaning to a Pacific Rim strategy.

Japanese-European rivalry

In any event, the first option of United States policy with regard to its economic conflict with Japan has been to try to shift it over onto the back of Europe. If the Americans want to reduce their take of Japanese exports, let the Japanese sell them in Europe and elsewhere. The former French Ambassador to Japan observed that Japan needs the United States but believes it can do without Europe, which is confirmed by Japanese officials who in turn privately regard Europe as a declining power whose national markets can be picked off one by one *(International Herald Tribune* 27 May 1982).

In the face of the increasing gravity of the economic crisis in Western Europe, both absolutely and relatively to the US, (which recovered more in 1975-1979 and again briefly in 1981), the Japanese export offensive in Europe, both for its own sake and to replace lost potential markets in the US, is anything but welcome. On the contrary, the vice-president of the European Economic Commission suggests that 'trade problems between Japan and the West. . .could lead Europe to impose a total ban on Japanese imports', while in the Commission itself 'Japan is seen as "most vulnerable" to trade pressures. . .and liable to become the first victim of EEC trade curbs' *(Financial Times* 26 January and 8 February 1982). Thus, the immediate economic basis for a major West-West political economic conflict between Europe and Japan already exists. A longer historical perspective based on past experience should lead us to expect the most serious rivalry to develop between the principal contenders for the hegemony of the declining economic power in the world and a tactical alliance between the latter and one of the major contenders. Thus, previously Germany and America fought for the mantle of formerly Great Britain, which took the side of the ultimate winner in the conflict. Similar situations had also developed in world history and it should not be surprising if an analogous one, and even the eventual victory of Japan, now still weaker than the US, in alliance with the declining America, should develop in the future.

US-European conflict

The other West-West serious economic conflicts of interest and policy have developed between the United States and Western Europe over trade particularly in petrochemical products, steel, and agricultural products and policy.

A major and growing conflict turns around steel. The world steel industry has been in the doldrums since 1973, and lagging or declining industrial investment and construction have sharply reduced steel demand and prices. Even after numerous steel mill shutdowns and/or labour dismissals, which have caused widespread social and political uproar all over Britain, Germany's Ruhr region, France's Lorraine, Belgium's Wallonia, Youngstown, Ohio in the US and elsewhere, much of the Western world's steel industry is working to only 60 to 80% of capacity. In June 1982, capacity utilisation in the American steel industry dropped to 42%, the lowest since 1938. Productivity in modern Japanese steel mills is over twice as high and labour costs less than half that of the United States, and West European producers (except the British) range in between. Accordingly, both have been able increasingly to penetrate the American market to compensate a bit for the weakness of their own, (and the Europeans to dampen the effects of the necessary reorganisation of their steel industry through intra-EEC cartel-like export quotas), but to the increasing chagrin and fury of American steel producers and workers. American steel consumption declined from about 120 million tons in 1973 to 100 million tons in 1975 and again in 1981. Imports in the meantime increased absolutely from 15 to 20 million tons, of which 6 million came from Western Europe, or from 13 to 20% of American consumption *(Financial Times,* 10 June 1982 citing the American Iron and Steel Institute and the US Department of Commerce). The Americans charge that, beyond productivity advantages, the European exporters enjoy cost advantages from European government subsidies ranging from $50 to $300 for a ton of steel that sells in the US for $500. To counteract this foreign steel invasion, the US government proposed so-called trigger prices based on estimated Japanese and European costs of production below which it would restrict imports.

Growing steel conflict

The never very satisfactory measure went on and off and on again, until the present recession depressed the American domestic steel price itself below the trigger price, and the high dollar cheapened the American price of European steel, which then made the whole scheme increasingly inoperative. The American steel companies took matters in their own hands and pressed a whole series of cases before the American courts and the US Department of Commerce to enjoin European producers from dumping, as the Americans claim, steel on their market. With the June 1982 American rulings in favour of the American steel companies and the imposition of US countervailing duties against them, the steel war between Europe and America was on. Moreover, the new American steel duties deliberately hit at the weaker and more subsidised British, French and Belgian producers than at the stronger German ones and are designed to sow discord among the Europeans and to impede their efforts at EEC common agreement on the necessary restructuring of the European steel industry and multilateral sharing of the apparently obligatory reduction of their steel exports to the United States. The significance of these decisions and measures 'goes well beyond the steel industry. . .and could well be applied to other products for other countries wishing to take action against subsidised imports'. *(Financial Times* 14 June 1982). The EEC and its member governments sought countermeasures against the Americans. One of these is to take the dispute to GATT but at the very real risk of breaking the organisation or at least its effectiveness in safeguarding international trade as well in other goods if they cannot reach mutual agreement on steel. Another major field in which to look for them is agriculture — which by itself has been developing as an even more acrimonious Euro-American field of combat.

Throughout the 1970s and spurred by the devaluations since 1971 and the conversion of 'Food for Peace' to 'Food is a Weapon' (US Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz) and 'Food is Power' (US Senator Hubert Humphries), American commercial exports of agricultural products have soared and include massive American exports of soybean and corn gluten feedstuffs to Europe for intensive feedlot livestock, meat and dairy industries. Therefore, the Europeans are set to reduce their dependence on American feedstuffs. In view of their own agricultural surpluses, the economic and political cost of the EEC Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for which the massive

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financial subsidies are politically more and more difficult to find in member state contributions, to bolster their own balance of payments, and to counter the Americans, the Europeans have increasingly pressed their own agricultural export drive in a weak international market — to the fury of the Americans.

As a result of the present crisis of American agriculture (the worst since the 1930s) and the challenge of European agriculture, the Reagan administration has begun to 'read the riot act' to the Europeans. The Reagan administration is gunning for EEC agricultural exports to Third World markets in the Middle East and Latin America and charging that these exports, like those of steel, are unfairly and illegally subsidised by the EEC. The US Secretary of Agriculture told Congress that 'we fear that the EEC is seeking to solve its internal agricultural overproduction and budget problems by converting CAP into a Common Export Policy based on extensive subsidies' *(International Herald Tribune* 26 January 1982). Washington has gone on the offensive in this now major US-EEC dispute *(Financial Times* 8 February 1982).

WEST-WEST CONFLICT OVER NORTH-SOUTH TRADE

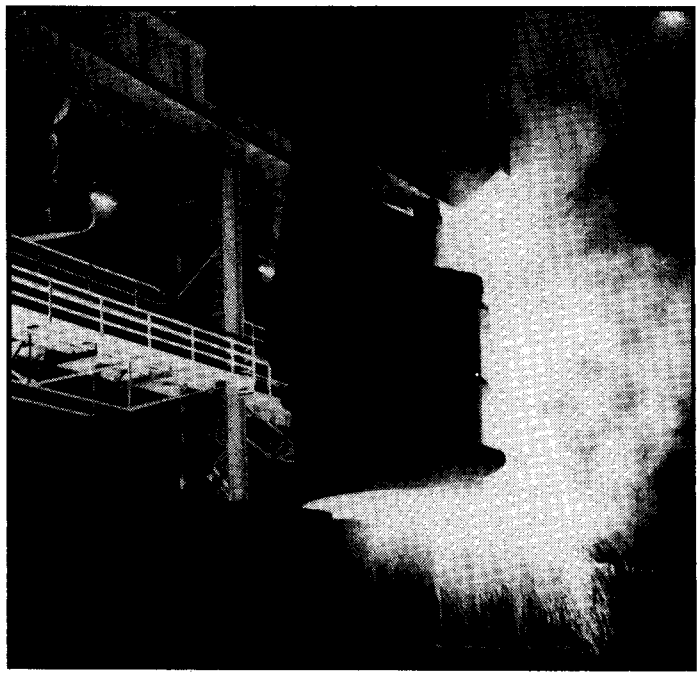
Transatlantic conflicts of interest and policy over international trade and foreign policy issues have increasingly shaped the North-South debates and negotiations in which the Americans and Europeans appear as competitors as often as allies. Through the late 1970s the Americans were joined and sometimes even outdone by the Germans in their hard-line opposition to any concessions to Third World demands for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) at the many conferences and negotiations at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and 1977 International Finance conference in Jamaica; the United Nations, UNCTAD, FAO and Law of the Sea conferences; the Paris North-South Dialogue; and elsewhere.

More recently, however, Germany has softened its line towards the Third World, and the American government has sought to impose its Reaganomic marketeering on the South almost alone, except for the loyal political support of Mrs Thatcher's Britain, while the Third World view has found its loudest northern echo in Mitterrand's Socialist Party government of France. For instance, the US unilaterally torpedoed the laboriously negotiated compromise on the UN Law of the Sea and dragged its feet alone on Global Negotiations (the new euphemism for the ill-fated NIEO) until especially Canada and France elicited a grudging provisional go-ahead for talks from Reagan only in return for concessions to the Americans' hard line on financial matters at the summits in Cancun, Mexico and Versailles.

The developments underlying these shifts in interest and policy seem to be that the Europeans have become much more competitive and competition minded on Third World markets. An early manifestation of this development was the German proposal to sell nuclear power plants and fuels to Brazil and the French one to Pakistan in a very depressed international market on which the United States and the Soviet Union had previously had a virtual monopoly. The Americans immediately raised a storm of protest against the dangers of nuclear proliferation to Third World powers that might convert this technology and material into atomic bombs. In the meantime, the much more threatening development of the bomb by Israel and South Africa proceeded much more quietly, while the Brazilian and Pakistan projects were put on ice under American pressure.

Latin America

European and American competition also increased notably in each other's economic backyards and political spheres of interest in the Third World. The Europeans and the Japanese increased their



penetration of traditionally US markets in Latin America in everything from automobiles, equipment and machinery, to agricultural products. The Third World magazine *South* (February 1982) reports that the EEC 'is planning closer trade and economic links with Central America, including a cooperation agreement and increased financial assistance for eight states.' This initiative is backed by France and Germany, but 'the United States will consider any "special relationship" with these eight states an intrusion into its own sphere of influence. There has been speculation that the US may retaliate by making inroads into the southern Mediterranean states, the EEC's "backyard".'

The political accompaniment of this fervently pursued incipient and hoped for penetration of previously private American economic hunting preserves has been the increasingly vocal overtures and political-economic support of social democratic Second International parties and even armed political movements in Latin America by European and especially German Social Democracy, under the leadership of Willy Brandt, while the Americans back the military dictatorships and at best Christian Democratic civilian alternatives in Latin America. The resulting political conflict became most visible through the European social democratic support for the Sandinista movement and then government in Nicaragua and for the opposition to the American backed government in El Salvador. Ironically (but as we may observe in the review of East-West relations below not so uncharacteristically) the Reagan administration White Paper on El Salvador in early 1981 called the opposition a typically Soviet communist plot when the Soviet Union or Cuba had sent no material support to the rebels but the West German Social Democrats had! The French competed with the US for Mexican oil where it was still scarce and then underlined the continuing transatlantic conflict of interest and policy over Central America by selling arms to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

Only over the war in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands have the Americans and Europeans lined up on the same side with Britain, though the West Germans have done so very halfheartedly to protect their NATO interests and collaboration with Britain, while the French Socialist Party government has lent Britain its fullest support, possibly with a view to receiving the same when her own remaining colonial possessions may be threatened.

East Asia and increasingly Australia has been left substantially to

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Japan and India to the Soviet Union, but both the Americans and the Europeans are making some efforts to reassert their economic and political influence, in the region generally and especially in and in part through China. However, the more Japan is excluded by European or American competition elsewhere the greater will its dependence be on Asia. There is a possible revival of the Japanese 'Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere' of the 1930s through the creation of a new Japan-Asia bloc in the 1980s or 1990s. The possible collaboration by China and the United States in a Pacific Basin and Rim strategy remains to be seen.

Middle East

The main bone of contention between the Americans and Europeans, however, is the Middle East. Europe is highly dependent on oil imports from the Middle East and on exports to pay for them. Exports to the Middle East OPEC countries and the socialist countries provided an essential safety net for the West, and especially for European heavy industry during the slump of Western demand in the 1973-75 recession and its faltering recovery since then. The inability of both market areas to pay for similar imports and increases of Western exports during the 1979-1982 recession is a major reason for the failure of the European economies, which are much more dependent on them than the American, to weather the last recession as well as the previous one. Moreover, although the

> 'our trade relations with the United States are the worst I have seen since the end of the war'

Europeans have a payments surplus with the socialist and non-oil exporting Third World countries, the Europeans have a significant trade and payments deficit with the USA, Japan and of course OPEC. In view of the already reviewed trilateral conflict among the industrial capitalist regions of the West, it is all the more important for Europe to redress its deficit with the Middle East as much as possible by exporting there in return — and driving the Americans and Japanese out of these lucrative markets.

This is the economic background for the European political disagreements with the United States about foreign policy with regard to Iran and the American embargo sparked by the US Tehran embassy 'hostage' crisis as well as with regard to the Israeli-Arab conflict and especially the Palestine issue. The Americans sponsored the Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt, for which the latter was isolated by other Arabs as a traitor to their cause. The Europeans, especially at their 1980 declaration in Venice, instead lent some support to the PLO and the formation of a separate Palestinian state.

In the face of a new Arab-Israeli war, timed by the latter's invasion of Lebanon to coincide with the Versailles economic and Bonn NATO summit meetings in June 1982, the assembled leaders of the West failed even to agree on a joint NATO statement, let alone action, to respond to the occasion, as the *Financial Times* (11 June, 1982) observed in its editorial. The European heads of state assembled at an EEC summit a couple of weeks later issued a joint communique demanding Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, but without even hinting at an embargo on Israel, such as they imposed on Argentina over the conflict with Britain.

WESTERN ALLIANCE CONFLICTS OVER EAST-WEST TRADE AND STRATEGIC ISSUES

Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 is widely claimed to have undermined the East-West detente of the 1970s and to have ushered in the beginnings of a new cold war. But the Soviet Union had reason to believe that detente and especially its relations with the United States were deteriorating anyway no matter what the Soviet Union did; it had after all offered to defuse tension in Europe by pulling some of its troops out of East Germany. The United States to the contrary had in fact been blowing an increasingly cold war wind in the Soviet face for some time. The US Senate had been dragging its feet against signing the SALT II arms control treaty with the Soviet Union that it had so laboriously negotiated in good faith with the US, while the latter were preparing and then announced a new programme to install intercontinental MX missiles in its Western states (whose vulnerability would only make them adequate for first strike puposes). To add insult to injury, the US increasingly used its 'China card' against the Soviet Union. The Carter administration also pledged to increase real military expenditures by 3% per year and elicited promises from its NATO partners to do the same (in an economic climate in which consumer, investment and export demand were unstable or lagging). Most significantly, NATO had already taken its 'Two Track' decision to instal new Pershing and Cruise missiles directed toward the Soviet Union from European soil by 1983 and in the meantime to use this track and threat to provide strength to the US to negotiate a new arms control agreement with the Soviet Union on another track, that Carter's successor Reagan would baptise START. That is, the US Carter administration had been blowing very cool air on detente already before the events in Afghanistan, which the US then used to justify even colder blows (and Carter himself used to take the wind out of the Kennedy challenge to his Democratic nomination) before Reagan defeated him and made the cold war wind even icier.

The new Reagan administration, in the throes of a nostalgia to make America no 1 again, certainly developed to the nth degree what the previously quoted four foreign policy institutes termed 'the tendency to consider every event in the world in purely East-West terms'. Among other things, it immediately set out to dispatch Carter's modest 3% annual increase of military expenditures to the garbage heap and to escalate the arms race several fold. Apart from the hoped for salutary economic effects of arms spending in the United States (which Reagan soon found to be dampened by their unsalutary effects on the budget deficit and Congress), the *Washington Post* editorialised, 'there is a crucial economic dimension to the Reagan strategy for dealing with Soviet power. It is that the Soviet Union, although a superpower, is relatively backward and cannot keep up in arms-building competition without suffering even harsher internal strains. This has been, of course, a familiar element in Western thinking about the Soviet Union since 1917... It is being asked now, however, whether this time around the Soviet Union may not be near a bending point — some observers say a breaking point — after all' (*International Herald Tribune*, 19 November 1981).

On the occasion of the dispute about the gas pipeline, the US Ambassador to France officially clarified: 'I welcome this opportunity to explain out actions. This is the background: the Soviet economy is in trouble... One is a serious shortage of foreign currency in relation to ambitious five-year plans...Their (foreign) cash flow is down because of a drop in prices of oil' etc, and the United States wants to keep it down. The Ambassador goes on to explain that 'I do not see the pipeline issue as primarily one of European dependency...The central point is that the Russians are in economic trouble...[and] the United States is perfectly justified in refusing actively to facilitate the quantum leap forward that will come from the Russians' expanded use of gas...[of which] 85% is to be used to fuel Soviet internal industry ... [and] provide the basis for further industrial expansion, which would otherwise be impossible...[and which] would have a profound beneficial effect on Soviet industrial, and subsequently Soviet military, capability...This view is the pri-

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mary basis of the American measures against the Siberian pipeline' (*International Herald Tribune* July 24-25 1982).

Extending the embargo

Of course, this new American economic offensive strategy against the Soviet Union also includes other moves and was already begun in the Carter administration. The United States had used the Afghanistan issue to impose a grain embargo against the Soviet Union, which was broken by the Argentine military junta and never totally enforced even in North America and which the far right Republican candidate Reagan promised to annul, which he finally did. The US lengthened the list of prohibited 'strategic' exports to the Soviet Union. The Americans also boycotted the Moscow Olympics in the summer of 1980 and twisted as many allied arms as possible to do the same — with varying success in Europe in the face of their allies' responses, which varied from recalcitrance to grudging support (except from Mrs Thatcher, whose Britain athletes went to Moscow anyway).

More seriously, the United States started trying to infuse the cold war Co-Com(mittee) with new life to procure agreement from its NATO allies to increase the list of industrial items whose export or licensing to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is embargoed for 'strategic' reasons. Since exports to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe — except for grain — are small potatoes to the United States, it could well afford to press for such export prohibitions, whose implementation would however impose a significant absolute loss of markets, profits and jobs on some European economies, and thereby help to weaken them relative to the United States to boot. Exports to the East account for 6-9% of the exports and 1.5% of the GNP of West Germany. But several hundred thousand jobs and untold profits depend directly on these exports from Germany and France and a small number of very large heavy industrial equipment firms and their banking connections would face serious losses from the reduction of trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Some medium sized German companies depend for 30-40% of their trade with the East and would face bankruptcy by its elimination. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Europeans have steadfastly rejected most of the American proposals and the hypocrisy of their political justification in the face of the renewed grain exports that are important to the Americans and Soviets. The American 'red alert' about technology transfer with subsidised credit to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe awoke some Europeans but failed to move them.

Poland

This increasingly serious conflict of economic interest and acrimonious political disagreement over foreign policy came to a head over the crisis, martial law declaration, and debt management in Poland. The Americans sought to blame all of the events in Poland on the Soviet Union and to cut off trade and credits to both of them as much as possible. The American Secretary of Defence Weinberger even went so far as to propose that the West refuse all further credit rollover or refinancing of the US $27 billion Polish debt in order to force Poland into default and to oblige the Soviet Union to pick up the pieces and carry the burden. Secretary of State Haig replied that a Polish defualt 'could bring the ruin of East-West trade and mean the collapse of the West Germany economy' and other far-reaching and unpredictable effects and that 'had we followed the advice of some, we'd be in a hole...[and] have the Europeans side with the Russians.' (*Guardian,* 20 February 1982).

Wiser counsels in the Department of State and among virtually all Europeans involved prevailed to quash the Weinberger idea, whose implementation would also have seriously exposed several major European banks to failure and thereby through a chain reaction the entire Western banking system to a crash of its already exceedingly unstable financial house of cards. Already before 13 December 1981, the *Financial Times* (22 June 1981) quoted the explanation of an international banker: 'In essence the problem is simple. They've got our money and can't repay: either we agree to wait, or we write it off. With so much money at stake no one wants to take the loss. So we agree to wait — we have no choice.' The declaration of martial law and military rule in Poland — as an alternative to Soviet intervention — in no way increased the range of choice; rather the contrary, since it undermined the 'umbrella' theory according to which the Soviet Union would eventually be willing — as a sort of lender of last resort — or obliged — especially after any Soviet military intervention — to bail Poland and other East European debtor countries out of their inability to pay. Soviet inaction in this regard left the entire East European trade and financial situation temporarily a bit confused.

For the first time in 1981, West Germany's trade with the East was in deficit as the economic and debt crisis in East and West undermined business. Then the Polish crisis was soon followed by Romania's inability to service her debt, which also had to be rescheduled. Western bankers suffered a severe crisis of confidence in Eastern Europe's formerly good as gold ability to pay and in the supposed umbrella insurance of Soviet gold as a last resort. Suddenly all of Eastern Europe suffered a liquidity crisis, as even the miracle economies of Hungary and East Germany found themselves unable to raise syndicated loans through regular Western financial channels. German industrialists feared that the fat years of sustained East-West trade expansion are over, and bankers sought to avoid any further unnecessary risks (*Der Spiegel* No 5 1982). Both inclined to lend a more attentive ear than before to the American arguments of economic sanctions against the East. But only with uncertainty.

Continental European interest

The headlines of *Business International* (BI) and its affiliates *Business Europe* (BE) and *Business Eastern Europe* (BEE) in early and mid 1982 were revealing: 'Confusion Follows Reagan Trade Ban' (BEE June 25 1982); 'Summits Underline Soviet Role in Trade' (BEE June 18); 'Trade War.Threat to US Exports' (BE June 18); 'US Business Opposes Reagan Sanctions' (BEE February 26); 'Western Imports Vital to Polish Economy' (BEE February 19). Confirmation of the last one came from the Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade (quoted by the *Financial Times* 26 March 1982): 'We must realise that demands that our imports from the West be replaced by imports from the socialist countries is out of tune with economic reality. For the moment such large scale changes are not possible.' At the same time, the size and membership of the West German official business and government delegations to the Leipzig trade fair in East Germany led the *Financial Times* (22 March 1982) to observe that 'there appears to be no drop in West German interest to revive East-West trade which, it is hoped, is only temporarily in the doldrums' and that West German Chancellor 'Schmidt opposes Soviet trade war. . .Despite concern over the US attitude, the West German government feels all European Community countries are agreed in their desire to avoid a trade war with the East' *(Financial Times* 1 April 1982).

To counter European resistance to sanctions over Poland and to their objections to Cocom reclassification of items for export embargo, the Americans tried another tack: the reclassification of the countries in the East and elsewhere themselves as regards the type and interest cost of supplier credits for export to them to which they are entitled by common agreement among the Western supplier countries. The Americans have sought to get the socialist countries reclassified into richer country categories that do not merit concessional credit terms or guarantees for suppliers from Western govern-

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ments. The European governments have again resisted the American pressures, while individual firms and/or their banks have been absorbing the difference between the officially supported interest rates on supplier credits and the even lower real interest that they charge Eastern buyers under the table to secure the contracts. The United States pressed its allies on this matter at the Versailles summit and received a grudging but vague agreement from them, which led to an agreement a few weeks later to reclassify the credit eligibility of all countries and thereby to increase the official credit costs to the East (until interest rates fall).

The pipeline issue

Another issue of East-West trade that brought Europe into conflict with the United States is the construction and finance of the gas pipeline and the export of gas from the Soviet Union through Eastern Europe to Western Europe. The Americans have claimed to be concerned that Western European dependence on some energy from the Soviet Union would endanger the security of the West Europeans, who do not share this concern or even believe the concern of the Americans, who have offered to sell Europe surplus American coal instead! The Europeans argue that they plan to derive only a small part of about 6% of their energy supplies from the Soviet Union, which would in fact reduce European dependence on Middle Eastern oil, and that the construction of the pipeline provides much needed outlets for European steel and equipment. While the eventual Western European purchase of more Soviet gas will provide the Soviet Union with a steady stream of hard currency with which to buy industrial and agricultural imports from the West, from which Europe of course hopes to benefit more than the United States. The Americans argue that 'we' cannot afford to underwrite Soviet economic development with Western business finance and government guarantees; while the Europeans argue that they cannot afford not to guarantee their own economic growth through business with the East.

The gas pipeline issue, after building up in combination with American pressure on Europe to restrict export credits to the East and the US decision to impose countervailing duties on European steel, suddenly brought an American and European political explosion after the June 1982 Versailles summit. The summit had produced an uneasy compromise involving European acceptance of some (undefined) concessions on export credits and American ones on the gas pipeline. A week later, apparent shifts in the balance of power within the Reagan administration led the US President to order the prohibition of pipeline component deliveries also by extra-territorial holders of US licences for technology in Europe and elsewhere. Secretary of State Alexander Haig resigned in protest against this decision (which was taken in his absence against his known opposition to it) and others including over support to Israel after the invasion of Lebanon, over which he was in conflict with Secretary of Defence Weinberger and National Security Advisor Clark. The political wisdom of both the American pipeline decision and US support for Israel in Lebanon was editorially questioned by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. The shaky legality of 'Reagan's March Toward Economic War' through American prohibitions to non-American firms on foreign soil was highly questioned even in the US, and the Europeans threatened to take the matter to the International Court of Justice.

The European reaction

The European reaction was unprecedented in postwar history. The EEC Commission demanded that the US rescind its pipeline decision. The EEC foreign ministers 'denounced US actions in firm and menacing terms'; the EEC heads of state summit meeting issued a joint declaration against the US decision and also called for the withdrawal from Lebanon of Israel, which enjoys US support. The Vice President and Industry Commissioner of the EEC declared 'we are in a state of extreme political and economic tension with Washington'. *(International Herald Tribune* 23 June 1982).

National protests in Germany, France, Britain, Japan and elsewhere were even stronger. The governing Social Democratic Party in Germany accused the US of 'interference in internal European affairs' and the German Finance Minister of failing to observe the sovereignty of other states, which would seriously affect the credibility of US companies abroad; the head of the German industrial association predicted major new tensions between Europe and America; the head of Germany's biggest union referred to American 'insolence'; and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt announced that the pipeline and gas deal would proceed as contracted. The already tottering German electric industry giant AEG faces immediate bankruptcy if its AEG-Kanis division is unable to proceed with its gas-turbine deliveries order, which is worth about $300 million. A number of French and Italian firms are also liable to suffer severely *(Financial Times* 21,22,24,28 June 1982).

French President Mitterrand, who has lent Reagan's political anti-Soviet line substantial support, 'delivered a wide-ranging attack on US economic and financial policy' and his government prepared for an 'uncompromising fight against the US decision'. The Japanese Premier Suzuki and his International Trade and Industry Minister also protested and asked for exemption of the offshore Siberian Sakhalin gas project, in which Japan has a direct interest. The British Minister for Trade denounced 'an attempt to export unemployment from the US to Europe', and President Reagan's most faithful ally and anti-Soviet ideologue, Prime Minister Thatcher announced in Parliament that any British firm that observed this American ruling would be violating British law and would be prohibited by her government from complying with the American prohibition to sell to the Soviet Union! *(Financial Times,* 29, 30 June, 1 July). The Italian government concretely signified its rejection of the Reagan decision by having its state-owned engineering company supply turbines for the pipeline in fulfilment of its contract despite the American prohibition to do so *(Financial Times* 8 July 1982).

Then, all of these major European governments declared that the American pipeline ban should be defied and that their firms would fulfil their delivery contracts. All of the European political leaders who had recently met President Reagan at Versailles and Bonn seemed to regard his decision as a betrayal of the so recently made summit promise not to press further on the pipeline matter and seemed to feel that he had added insult to injury by violating European national sovereignties through his extra-territorial ruling. In the American attempt to settle domestic political disputes in favour of the Reagan administration hard-liners (although Alexander Haig claims that history will show that he was one of them), the Americans may have gone one step too far on the pipeline issue in trying to push the Europeans around. (The Americans subsequently sought to trade backtracking on the pipeline decision for more European concessions on export credits to the East). The newly named EEC ambassador to Washington declared in response to all this that 'our trade relations with the United States are the worst I have seen since the end of the war. . .[and] I am not excluding that the situation with the [Reagan] administration will get worse' *(International Herald Tribune* 2 July 1982).

Military issues

Parallel to these political economic conflicts about trade policy is the growing dispute about military expenditures and stationing of new

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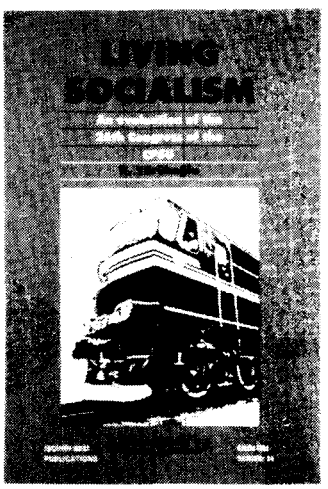

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strategic weapons in Europe with which the United States opened its new cold war offensive. Anti-nuclear and peace movements throughout Western Europe (except France) and opposition parties especially in the parliaments of the smaller countries and Britain, but even strong opposition within the left wing of the ruling Social Democratic Party in West Germany, have rapidly grown in popular strength — with mobilisations of 200,000 to 400,000 demonstrators against the stationing on their soil of new nuclear missiles in each of several countries and totalling a million people within a single month — and in political influence. German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt told the United Nations that it is necessary to listen to these people who cannot all be wrong but at home threatened to resign if they got their way. President Reagan and Secretary of State Haig first dismissed these European demonstrations of opposition to new American weapons as insignificant mass manipulations by Moscow and poured fuel on the fire of European fury and insecurity by declaring that Europe might become a theatre of nuclear war without direct American-Soviet nuclear engagement. The European response and the development of a movement for local nuclear free zones and an arms freeze in the United States, however, obliged Reagan to alter his tactical stance and in order to take his own cold war wind out of the sails of these peace movement initiatives to propose a 'zero option' according to which the US offered to desist from placing the new missiles in Europe if the Soviet Union would dismantle or withdraw existing ones.

The Soviet Union has in fact repeatedly offered to withdraw missiles to beyond the Urals in return for some concessions and lesser threats from the Americans, and in June 1982 Brezhnev gave a Soviet pledge to the United Nations not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in the hope that the United States might do the same, as proposed in an important *Foreign Affairs* article by McNamara, Bundy and Kennan. In his subsequent United Nations speech, President Reagan failed to respond positively, while other American officials responded quite negatively.

The so-called Soviet threat

In view of the consistently conciliatory Soviet stance on these nuclear issues and the fact, which is repeatedly emphasised in Washington, that the only Soviet strength lies in the military field since they are extremely and increasingly weak in the economic, political and ideological ones, the question arises why the West Europeans and Americans should consider the Soviet Union such a threat to their security. One answer is that according to opinion surveys, especially the younger generations in Europe no longer feel any such Soviet threat. The Americans continue to insist on it (although the youngest there also seem to feel more threatened by the bomb than by the Soviets).

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Perhaps another answer to the question of the supposed threat by the Soviet Union is that not only it, but also the United States is increasingly economically and politically as well as ideologically weak relative to Western Europe, and that both superpowers can only rely on their nuclear arms and troops to exercise any decisive influence on and sway economic and trade policy in Western Europe! That is, in view of the shift in the economic and political balance of power from the United States to Europe, observed by their four foreign policy institutes, the only remaining ace in the American bargaining hand with the European powers is the American nuclear umbrella and the associated American troops on European soil that are supposed to make the American nuclear commitment to Europe credible. But of course, the United States can only use the threat of maintaining its nuclear ace up its sleeve if there is a corresponding Soviet threat against Europe from which the United States can protect — or threaten no longer to protect — the Europeans. Therefore, the Americans are obliged to and repeatedly do play up the Soviet nuclear and conventional arms threat to Western Europe for all it is worth. But it is worth less and less to more and more Europeans, especially as the Soviet Union is increasingly less able to keep its own and its East European neighbours' houses in economic and political order and could hardly be expected to intervene effectively let alone militarily in Western Europe.

The real value of the supposed Soviet threat to Western Europe, which the Americans repeatedly try to conjure up by reference to and transreference from real or supposed Soviet relations with Vietnam, the Middle East and Iran, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Nicaragua and now El Salvador, — is to the United States and its economic and political interests itself. Analogously, as the guiding spirit of END (European Nuclear Disarmament) EP Thompson points out, the British and French 'independent deterrent(s). . .are aimed, not at the Warsaw powers, but at the White House. If they can commit us, we must maintain at least a mini-bluff that we can commit them'.[2] For if Western Europeans once liberated themselves from the objectively unnecessary trauma of the supposed threat of a Russian bear embrace, the American bald eagle would find its wings substantially clipped down to size. The American use of the nuclear ace to blackmail Western Europe (and Japan) on matters of conflicting economic and trade policy would become a useless joker, whose further attempted use by the Americans would render them ridiculous.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it appears that the natural course of world capitalist development and its renewed structural crisis are undermining the economic basis of the Atlantic Alliance, and generating ever sharper political dissension within it also about strategic issues of relations with the Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe. These in turn, in part because of the world economic crisis, are facing increasing economic and political problems of their own. The combination of these Western and Eastern political-economic problems poses serious dangers for the stability and peace of the world based on the bi-polar Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) and nuclear parity faceoff between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. But the same political-economic forces that pose this danger also offer the opportunity to forge a new multi-polar balance of power including a possible Pan European political-economic entente to again stabilise the strategic balance at least in the European theatre. I hope to return to these issues in a future article. □

[2] E P Thompson *Exterminism and Cold War* 1982 p12.

For further discussion of some of these themes see: Frank, *Crisis: in the World Economy* (1980), *Crisis: in the Third World* (1982) and *Reflections on the World Economic Crisis* (1981).

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The problem of health care is 'infinite demand and finite resources'. We need a big rethink.

Steve Iliffe

Health Care a headache for the Left

The Health Service is in crisis. Pickets across hospital gates parade it, and ministers, real and shadow, proclaim it. Our newspapers reflect the conflicts between government, strikers and public need in headlines, pictures and text. Scenes of unprecedented conflict fill TV bulletins: police vans doubling as ambulances; uniformed nurses beneath union banners; elegant teaching hospital specialists eyeball-to-eyeball with porters and cleaners; Health Authority chairmen challenging the government — and getting the sack. There is something peculiarly British about this battle within the state. We are now so used to conflicts within the apparatus of health care, and so aware that similar problems do not (often) appear in France, West Germany or Scandinavia, that we can believe that our health care crisis is as unique as our health service.

The belief is false. At its most erroneous, it assumes that Conservatism is the origin of the crisis. A hawkish government ideologically hostile to state industry in all its forms, aims to dismantle the NHS and making the working population suffer. Replace Thatcher (or her successor) with Foot (or his), and the NHS could easily be retained, and rapidly expanded, without conflict or contradiction.

A sharper criticism selects monetarism as the problem, and an expansionary economic policy as the solution. Replace the monetarists, whether Tory or Labour, with Keynesian politicians, and the health crisis will recede. Money diverted from defence, from private profits, from the super-rich, and from newly nationalised industries will solve the problems of low pay, under-staffing, unequal distribution of resources and ancient facilities. Under a Left government the National Health Service would thrive again. Or would it?

A structural crisis

Not for long, I think. In the short term the alternative economic strategy might permit dramatic expansion in health care. In the longer term, even if the national economy recovers from its current state, the structural crisis of health care is likely to continue. This 'crisis' is common to West Europe, the USA and Scandinavia, and there is evidence that it is also a growing feature in Central and East Europe, and in the USSR. In essence, it is a crisis of over-consumption, best described in the West by the Right, with the slogan 'infinite demand, finite resources', and in Eastern Europe by the idea of 'the suction economy'. The common theme in these contrasting perspectives is that demand exceeds supply, and that available resources are hoovered up by consumers regardless of the objective need for them. In health care this appears as increasing consumption of drugs, increasing expenditure on high-technology services, increasing staffing levels, and an increasing proportion of GNP devoted to health services.

The output in terms of better health from all this activity is not impressive, unless the avoidance of unemployment is considered. Qualitative improvements in the duration and quality of life are achieved, but they are often difficult to measure convincingly, and all too frequently, small-scale. Enormous efforts are needed for a low yield. The medicalisation of life, that turns pregnancy into pathology, that converts the poverty of old age into vitamin-deficiency states correctable by tablet, and that smooths away deprivation with tranquillizers, is one component of the crisis. A preoccupation with well-equipped hospitals, functioning round the clock as grossly-inefficient but very necessary salvage centres is a logical consequence of medicalisation. And the creation of expertise, which becomes more and more specialised and limited in scope as technology develops, completes the process.

If the problem is that some babies are born far too soon, then the answer must surely be: more special nurseries (with their incubators and respirators); more specially-trained nurses, doctors and technicians to look after them; and more studies of how these babies fare in later life, to see if it is all worthwhile. Common sense (made from sectional professional interests, the anxious wants of health service users, and the profitable ambitions of drug and hospital supply industries) carry us all down this road — providing the best service possible for The People. That's progress.

Rising pattern of expenditure

Unfortunately, it can't last. Demand for health care may not be infinite, but as yet we have no experience of its limits. Expenditure on health services in Britain as a proportion of the GDP, has steadily risen since the mid-50s. An increasing share of this expenditure has been taken by the hospitals, with a decrease in the proportion used by general practice (Figure 1). There is little evidence to show that increased expenditure has altered important indices of health. 'Productivity', in terms of increased numbers of patients discharged from hospital, or seen for the first time in outpatient clinics, has not

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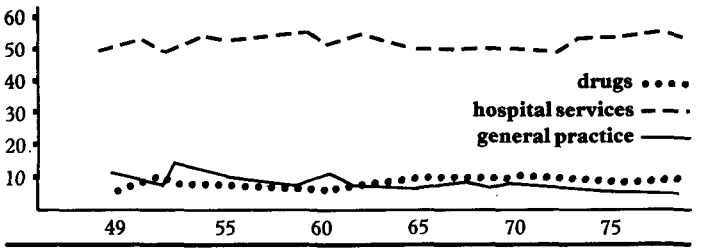
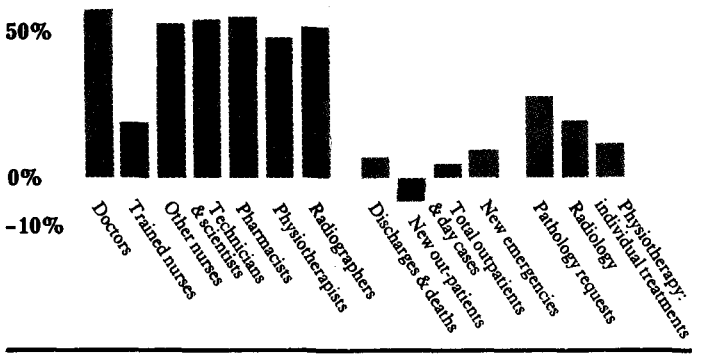
Figure 1 **Spending on hospital services, drugs and general practice, as a percentage of total NHS spending, 1949-78**



Source: Royal Commission on the National Health Service, 1979.

Figure 2 **Percentage increases in hospital services 1971-77**



Source: *Crisis in the Health Service*, Haywood & Alaszewski, 1980.

Figure 3 **Public & private sources of finance for health care, 1975**

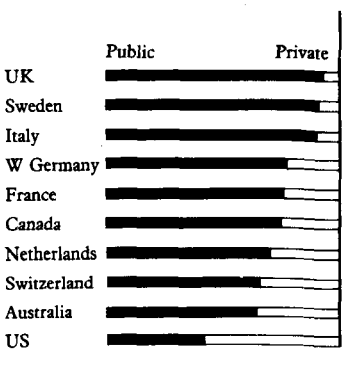
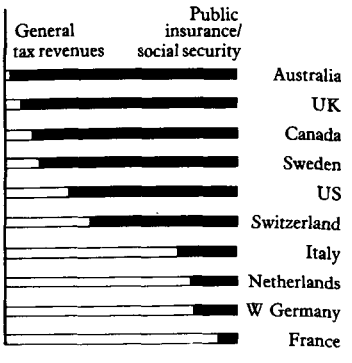


Figure 4 **Composition of public health care spending 1975**



increased proportionately to increased use of technology or increased staff deployment (Figure 2). Expansion in staff numbers in the NHS has been dramatic but capital expenditure on new facilities has been much more limited. The end result is an under-capitalised industry deploying more and more workers to achieve disproportionately smaller growths in yield. Starting from the assumption that the volume of illness already known to health workers is only 'the tip of the iceberg' of medical problems we still find that responding to such hidden problems is increasingly expensive.

Within Western Europe, and to a lesser extent in the USA, Australia and Canada, the rising costs of health care have been met from public funds. Figure 3 shows the relative contributions of public and private funds to health care, for ten countries, in 1975. The role of general taxation sources, as opposed to state-run insurance schemes, is shown for the same countries, in Figure 4. Those who believe that Britain leads the field in public spending on health may be surprised at the ways in which other countries use state funds for their health services. Even the USA, before Reagan, was forced into spending increasing amounts of Federal and State money on public hospitals, and the Medicare and Medicaid programmes.[1]

Controlling costs

The British National Health Service is remarkable within capitalism, for two features. The first is its use of general taxation revenue as its financial resource, rather than an ear-marked tax in the shape of health insurance. The second is its centralised control structure, designed for maximum efficiency in the use of resources. A series of structural reforms, conceived in the sixties, allowed successive UK governments to spend porportionately less on health care than their W European counterparts whilst maintaining a comprehensive service equivalent to any European system.

The three-tier administrative apparatus introduced in 1974 and based on the principle of 'delegation downwards, accountability upwards', created a mechanism that, in theory, could strictly control expenditure. It was accompanied by the hierarchic rationalisation of nursing (the Salmon report 1976) to create a cadre of nurse-managers and the involvement of the medical profession in corporate decision-making through the Cogwheel system.[2] Financial changes occurred within two years. In 1976, volume spending was replaced by cash limits, under a Labour government initiative. Volume spending required central funds to cover the costs of services provided at the local District or Regional level, with scope for bargaining between centre and periphery. Cash limits abolished negotiation by allocating specified cash sums to Regions, Areas and Districts. Overspending could be dealt with by cutting overspent sums from the following year's budget — a form of borrowing with catastrophic implications. Serious cuts in services to the population followed the introduction of cash limits, particularly since government estimates of inflation tended to fall short of the real figure.

The general strategy of both Labour and Conservative governments has been the same; to create an effective controlling mechanism that can restrain and possibly redirect NHS spending. Labour administrations have favoured redirection of finance towards areas of greatest need, and have emphasised the role of planning.[3] The Conservatives have opted to look for alternative, non-governmental, sources of finance, and have therefore promoted private medicine and private health insurance.[4] Neither type of government has challenged the basic assumptions about priorities in government spending on health compared with defence.

The traditional Left response

The traditional response from the Left has been to shift spending from defence to more socially-useful areas, health included. The government rejected the proposals of the Black Report on Inequality and Health, on the grounds that they would cost £2 billion. Reduce defence spending, by removing one or two items (like Trident), and

[1] 'Medicare' & 'Medicaid' are government-funded insurance schemes for the elderly and the poor. The impact of Reagan's administration on them is discussed in 'The Reaganomics of Health' by Geoff Rayner, in *Medicine in Society* Vol 8 no1 p35.

[2] Professional re-organisation occured on much wider scale than I can describe here. A detailed review appears in Stuart Haywood and Andy Alaszewski's *Crisis in the Health Service*, Croom Helm, 1980.

[3] The Resource Allocation Working Party became imfamous for its RAWP Report, which advocated re-direction of finance from allegedly less-needy to more-needy areas. The re-allocation was initiated at a time of cash-limiting, so that some areas (particularly London) were doubly deprived of funds whilst other areas (like Tyneside) had their cuts offset by re-allocated finance.

[4] See *Going Private: the case against private medicine* from the Politics of Health Group and *Condition Critical: private medicine and the NHS* from the Communist Party.

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that money becomes available. Adopt a policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament, and more cash is freed. Withdraw BAOR and demobilise it slowly, using the spare labour in an expanding economy, and two objectives can be achieved, in one move. The economic consequences of a redefined defence status could only favour the health of the nation.

This argument seems sound, but there are two problems in it. The first problem is that opting for neutrality is a huge political gamble. The gains may be substantial, although our experience of socialism does not guarantee that. The losses could be enormous. An economic and political counter-attack from the USA or the EEC may destabilise the reforming government and jeopardise all that it promotes — from public services like health care, through control of the economy, to democracy itself. How can the Left demonstrate that the gamble of changing the economy and social structure of Britain would be worth the risk? Only, I think, by offering new solutions to the new problems of evolving capitalism. In terms of our health service, this means confronting the second problem, the structural crisis within health care itself. Far from resolving the economic strains created by health service spending, an expansionary policy may worsen them. An initial recovery in the economy, coupled with redirection of finance, may give a short-term boost to health care spending. Will the NHS growth initiated in the 'boost' period continue even if economic growth slows down again? On past evidence, it will. If it does, how can a government committed to social care reduce spending on health services?

There is one sense in which the long-term structural problems of health care are more important to us than the immediate economic problems of underfinancing, cash-limits and low pay within the NHS. We have some ideas, from the socialist countries' experiences, of how to solve the economic problems through economic planning. We have little help, however, in dealing with structural problems, which seem to apply across the board. None of the countries of the socialist bloc seem to have come to terms with them yet, and there is no reserve of experience to use. In fact, sustained economic growth in socialist Europe seems to have postponed the impact of the more serious structural problems, whilst not eradicating the factors causing them. What Britain, Italy and the FDR experienced with their health care systems in the 70s appear to be prospects for the GDR, Hungary and possibly the USSR in the 80s.

The basic causes

If we look at the structural problems of health care in detail we can see how novel they are. Firstly, neither users nor suppliers of health care are responsible for its costs. When individuals pay directly and personally for health services, cost determines uptake. When demand (sometimes disguised as 'need') is allowed to determine uptake, in a service free at the time of use, a third party pays for whatever transpires. That third party may be the state's general taxation or a state-owned, or state-licenced, insurance system. When third parties meet the bill, neither health service users nor professional suppliers are concerned primarily with cost-benefits. Users do not 'shop around' wisely, because they are not acting as consumers of commodities, but in reality want problems solved, whatever the price. Providers do not generally ration their services on economic grounds, partly because they see solutions to problems in terms of

how can a government committed to social care reduce spending on health services?

the application of medical technology (drugs, tests, operations), and partly because they may be paid on a piecework basis.[5] Extension of third-party payment for health care to whole populations is a post-war phenomenon in both socialist and capitalist Europe.

Secondly, the equation 'health care = medical care' may be valid (up to a point) at a personal level, but it has unhappy consequences at a social level. Governments actively seeking to meet the needs of their people (like the 1945-50 administration, and socialist governments) have had to assume that health care is a technical task, with medical professionals as its most skilled technicians. In effect, technical experts have been given the right, within the principle of equal access to services, to determine not only how the service is provided, but how its goals are defined.

If heart disease in middle aged men becomes an epidemic killer, the answer, defined by the experts within their expertise, is more money for coronary care units, more cardiologists, more open-heart-surgery — even if the origin of the epidemic lies in social conditions of work and consumption. If lung cancer is a growing problem more cancer-specialists are needed. Control of tobacco consumption is outside the sphere of medical expertise, which sees itself as responding to individual problems created elsewhere. The logic is inescapable. Men and women with heart disease or lung cancer desperately need help. The more of them there are, the more help and helpers are needed. No government in a highly industrialised country can ignore these problems, and refuse to contribute in some way to their solution.

The consequence is the development of networks of hospitals filled with expensively-trained specialists and equally expensive machinery. Even where some kind of low-technology first-line of health service is retained, like Britain's general practitioners, the trend in spending constantly favours hospital-centred services. This will create enormous problems for a new kind of Labour government, for it will have to distinguish between essential spending on hospitals — to replace the one-third of hospital floor space built before 1900, or to restore cut services — and the pressure for more and more expenditure in response to increasing demand.

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The socialist countries

Socialist countries are becoming familiar with this problem too. In the GDR 6% of the population are employed in health and personal social services, (compared with less than 3% in Britain) and the Government's emphasis is now on increasing the efficiency of the health service through 'better'management — almost exactly the managerial strategy applied (without much success) in Britain in the 70s.[6] In Poland, Gierek's government introduced a National Health Fund for voluntary subscriptions, to increase the budget for health care.[7] The Hungarian health service deploys twice as many doctors per thousand population as Britain, and has a 25% larger workforce than the NHS but pay rates for health workers are lower than NHS rates, relative to GDP. Officially about 4% of Hungary's GDP is spent on health care, compared with 5.5% in the UK in 1980, but the Hungarian figure (unlike the British) excludes private medicine, prescription and other charges to patients, and medicines bought directly from chemists. One estimate puts the cost of Hungarian health care nearer 6% of GDP.[8] The socialist economies can bear, and may benefit from, large health services. There is little sign, though, that these services can escape from hospital-centred medicine and escalating costs. The mechanisms of control adopted by governments are remarkably familiar — centralised management, low pay for health workers, and alternative sources of finance through private medicine and charges to patients.

Finally, low-technology first-line services ('primary care' in jargon) can change sign, from being a barrier to expensive hospital-centred services to being a further area of costly expansion. Since 1948 British general practitioner services (doctors, dentists, pharmacists and opticians) have been used as a screen between the population and the hospital network. This screen has proved cheap to run, because like the hospital sector it has been undercapitalised. General practitioners provide their own premises, in the majority of cases, and receive subsidies for staff and buildings in return. Only 17% of GPs were working from health centres in 1980. Unlike the hospital sector, staffing levels have not risen dramatically. Governments aiming to reduce health care spending have always been careful to keep primary care just ticking over.

If, however, a Government chooses to expand the primary care system, either to further reduce access to hospital services, or to put more emhasis on preventive medicine, it must face the economic consequences. Primary care services, if properly constituted, are as expensive as hospital services, but for different reasons. For example, the capital cost of creating enough health centres to accommodate *half* of Britain's GPs in very basic, small-scale units, would be about £5000 million at 1979-80 prices. That is not much by NHS standards, but those health centres would be valueless without their staff, and staff expansion — to include more administrative staff, nurses, health visitors, dieticians, remedial therapists and psychologists as well as doctors — would be the major cost in primary care renewal. Any realistic shift to preventive medical care will demand increased contact time between people using the service and the workers providing it, and so would increase staffing levels even further. Whilst this may contribute to economic revival by creating jobs, it would still add to the costs of health care.

What kind of solution?

A government which opts to re-expand the NHS primarily by expanding its first-line services will have to find ways of limiting expenditure on hospital medicine. Like it or not, cost-control mechanisms will be needed, even within an expanding NHS budget. Traditional mechanisms aim either to discourage users by charging them directly (with prescription fees, dental charges and so on) or to limit availability and make people queue. Health service users also have traditional mechanisms for by-passing rationing; the most obvious one is the simple expedient of paying directly and personally for individual attention. How would a reforming government cope with the ideological challenge of rationing a 'comprehensive and freely-available' service? And what could it do to prevent the development of a parallel, private, system of health care? Worse still, what if the shift to primary care and preventive medicine proved to be as ineffective in altering people's health as hospital-centred medicine has been? What if the uptake of the expanded primary care services also expanded dramatically — would these services have to be rationed, too?

These structural problems in health care leave us guessing, at the moment. A government led by Jenkins and Owen, or Healey and Shore, would opt for conservative solutions of cash limits and service cuts for lack of any other. There is a great need for realistic alternative strategies, and for the groundwork that will

photo: Ann Silverleaf

[5] Most doctors in Britain are salaried employees of the NHS. However, all general practitioners (medical, dental, pharmacy and optical) are independent contractors to the NHS. They derive part of their income from fees for particular items of service that they perform. For example, GP doctors are paid for each cervical smear test done for a woman over 35 (or with more than three children), each child immunised, each contraceptive coil fitted and so on. Roughly one third of GP doctor's income comes from such fees. In capitalist Europe this 'fee for item-of-service' payment is more widespread than it is here.

[6] The theme of the GDR delegates to the International Conference on the Political Economy of Health in West Europe, held in Frankfurt in July 1982.

[7] See 'The Health of the Polish Health Service' by Frances Millard in *Critique* 15

[8] See Mark McCarthy's article in *The Health Services*, Friday July 9th 1982

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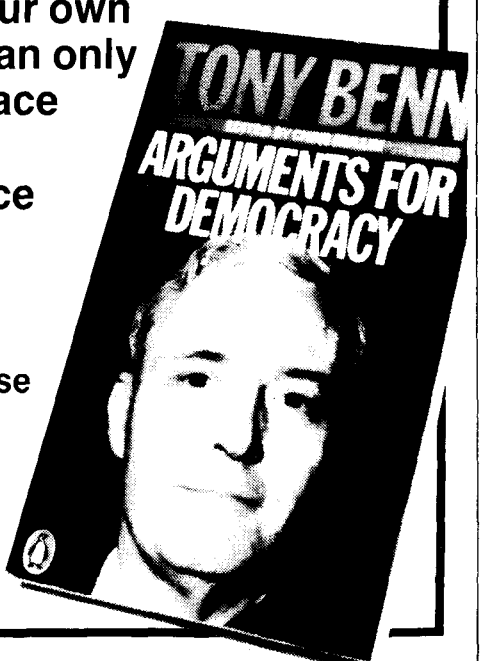

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allow their implementation. It would be untrue to say that there has been much progress, in alternative ideas or in alternative practice. On the contrary, traditional socialist thinking has incorporated 'technical rationality' in health care — the expert knows best. Solutions posed as alternatives, like self-help, or fringe-medicine, or 'natural' approaches (whether to health foods or to childbirth) are consumer responses fitted more for the market place than for social provision. Perhaps the movement for reform of maternity care, and more certainly, the campaign for women to control their fertility, challenge 'technical rationality' and provide us with models for action.

Whatever the models, we do need to replace expert control of decision-making in health by social control. As a minimum, that demands both public debate about priorities in health care and public control of health care administration. That is only a necessary precondition for social control, however, since our only experience is of technical rationality and our perspective is thoroughly medicalised. The prospect of a publicly controlled NHS meeting a widespread demand for say, 'check-ups' of no proven value at great expense, is not a satisfactory answer to the crisis in health care.

Need and demand

In health care 'demand' has determined the provision of services, not 'need'. 'Demand' is a market concept that is inapplicable to health care unless that care is provided on a market basis, through private medicine. 'Need' is a concept that assumes an objective state that can be measured and acted upon. It assumes that a mutual agreement can be reached between user and supplier to define a given problem one way, not another, and to act on it in one way, not another. For example, a headache may be evidence of a brain tumour to its sufferer, but of migraine or tension or some other cause to the supplier of medical care. The 'demand' may be for X-rays, brain scans and the attention of a brain surgeon. The 'need', however, is to work out the most likely cause and act upon it. In health care the concept of 'need' has a place since technical experts are thought to distinguish the 'need' within the 'demands'. We know that health professionals only make such distinctions at a basic level, by diagnosing and treating illness in individuals who demand attention. If there is no demand, then no need is perceived. Hence the enormous variations in the services used by people, across Britain, and across classes.

At the same time, the selection of the 'need' within the 'demand' depends on the selector's own bias. Brain surgeons, confronted with headaches, look for brain tumours with all the diagnostic equipment available. (If it is not available they agitate until it is.) Psychiatrists, on the other hand, will search for sources of anxiety or depression behind the headaches that they encounter. Brain surgeons finding no tumours may call on psychiatrists for help, and worried psychiatrists anxious not to miss physical diseases will use the services of brain surgeons. Both will soon become overworked, and demand more staff. Once in motion, the machinery of health care expands. Assessing its value, its effectiveness in solving people's problems, takes second place to efficient management of the mechanism. After all, the expert knows best, and if they want a bigger machine, that must be the right policy.

A government pledged to renew the NHS will have a difficult task. It must attend to the unmet need, and try to correct class inequalities in health care. It must also try to limit the activities of the supplier of health care, who will promote continuous expansion unless checked. How can it achieve both objectives? How can priorities be agreed and enforced? Can the contradictions be resolved by the Left's usual solution — democratic debate? Public debates on 'needs' and on their priority for action, will certainly take health policies out of expert hands and into political life. That will cause conflicts, of course. Experts created in the mould of 'technical rationality' will not readily give up their power over decision-making. Nor will drug and surgical supply industries that rely on experts' priorities for their profits accept a shift to social control. Local interests may clash with agreed priorities of need, with endless scope for conflicts with administrative structures. This is unfamiliar and dangerous territory for the Left, but well-known to the pragmatists and opportunists of the Right. Sadly despite a wealth of experience of planning, participatory democracy and the contradictions that develop within public administrations, available from 1917 onwards, we remain remarkably ignorant of the *real* problems of social control. The utopian socialism of Labour's Left (and the ultra-left) now thrives because a one-dimensional, propagandist faith has so greatly weakened mainstream Marxism.

Beyond slogans

The acceptance of economic reality in health care will be an unpleasant task for the Left, but very necessary. We cannot afford to assume that demand constrains the health care economy. It seems to be the opposite — the supplier determines economic change. Controlling the suppliers — drug and hospital equipment industries, and the professions themselves — is going to be a government priority. That inevitably leads to other problems: the relative run-down of industries that may be significant in the national economy; tight control over professional activity that can only provoke resistance and political conflict; and possibly rationing of health service provision. The pharmaceutical industry may be a potent contributor to export-earnings, and a major employer, even if only through its packing sub-industry (as in Britain). Professionals — particularly doctors — are by definition hostile to control and direction. How to plan distribution of professional staff, to direct professional labour to areas of greatest need, and to minimise or prevent altogether the growth of private medicine 'on the side', are questions barely considered in the Labour Party and the Left. Yet professional power is manifest, from its impact on the use of resources in the NHS, to the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile in 1973.[9] Rationing provokes resentment, queue-jumping by bribery, and a 'black economy' of private medicine — yet it may be a necessary and permanent feature of health care provision.

Brain surgeons, confronted with headaches, look for brain tumors with all the diagnostic equipment available

It is easy to produce the slogans: 'defend and extend the NHS'; 'restore the cuts'; 'abolish prescription charges'; 'ban private medicine'. The problems, however, are the problems of the 80s. The slogans leave the problems untouched. How much could a working class in power *really* achieve? What are the realistic goals for the Left? Perhaps answering these questions for health care — or housing policy, or education, or re-industrialisation, or any other basic issue — will allow us to answer the fundamental question: how to achieve revolutionary change? □

[9] See Geoffrey Hamilton's 'Professionalism: lessons from Chile' part 1 in *Medicine in Society* Vol 7 no2, 3, part 2 in Vol 7 no4.

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Peter Hain

Prospects for Labour

Many thousands of socialists and progressives have hailed recent left breakthroughs in the Labour Party. Indeed, the success of the movement popularly identified with Tony Benn has been one of the few exciting features of a political landscape otherwise filled with gloom and defeat.

Yet that very success has masked fundamental weaknesses within Labour's 'new left' — weaknesses which have now given the Party's right an opening through which to go onto the offensive. Suddenly, all the advances since the late 1970s look rather precarious.

How has this happened and what must be done to regain the initiative?

First of all it is important to recognise that the comparatively recent swing to the left had its roots in the disenchantment with the performance of Labour in office, going right back to the 1960s. It was in reaction to the failures of the 1964-70 Wilson years that the Party began shifting leftwards, adopting in 1973 a programme that was probably the most radical in its history. Propelled by Party activists determined to have socialist policies for a change and by a trade union movement blooded on the anti-Tory militancy of the early 1970s, Labour came back into office in 1974 with the ruling class in retreat.

But the policy advances made whilst in opposition were soon blocked and there was the familiar tale of compromise and sell-out, ending with the 1979 election being fought on a centrist manifesto after relations with the unions had been soured by the winter confrontation over pay.

The cumulative effect of all this was to push Party members to make increasingly uncompromising demands. Already, the pressure for mandatory reselection had built up and now the left concentrated on pressing for accountability of the leadership. What amounted to a coalition between left constituency parties and trade unions still embittered by rigid pay restraint, carried the historic reforms on reselection and electing the leader. It was this combination of *political* disillusion in the constituencies and *economic* disillusion in the unions that enabled the left to achieve success.

The sheer breadth of support overcame bitter intransigence from the right, the tactical brilliance and hard work of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy giving the necessary cutting edge.

In one sense these victories did have solid foundations in the rank and file, defined as constituency and union *activists*. Without their pressure on Party and union leaders the reforms could not have been won.

But in another sense the reforms were less firmly based. The 'real' rank and file of the labour movement had not necessarily been won to the left's cause. Even the extent of support amongst shop stewards and branch officials was exaggerated in the heady days following the 1979 and 1980 conferences.

What the Labour left had done was to exploit to the full the democratic machinery of the Party and to do so with relentless energy. Essential as this was — it is hard to see how else the reforms could have been won — the strategy was entirely within the tradition of British 'labourism'. That is to say, the left's campaign hardly engaged at all with wider class and group forces outside the official structures of the labour movement.

It was a characteristically inward-looking campaign. Even sympathetic outsiders could be forgiven for interpreting it as just another bureaucratic power battle amongst competing elites remote from ordinary workers and voters.

As a result the foundations of the left's advances were a great deal more fragile than many were prepared to admit. Just to rub home the point, the conference majorities for the reforms were very narrow and some of them came only after the right had been outwitted on the day by the left's greater tactical acumen. They were also produced by the swings of a few union block votes that could so easily have gone the other way.

The situation in the country

Moreover, the left may have been winning in the *Party* but right wing ideas were meanwhile winning in the *country*, the ideological lurch rightwards under Thatcherism being symptomatic of this.

Such is the nub of our present predicament and the reason why Labour's left could so easily be marginalised.

For instance, extravagant claims were made just a year or two back for the way the unions were swinging leftwards. That may have been true for a layer of union *activists*. But it was emphatically not true of ordinary union members who were demoralised by Thatcherism and remained ripe for plucking by right wing union leaders and now — as has happened over the register — by the Party establishment.

Even the Deputy Leader campaign — the focus for the left's activity in 1981 as the next stage on from winning the reforms — contained more salutary lessons than many were willing to acknowledge in the after-

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math of Tony Benn's extraordinary achievement in coming so desperately close to winning. Failing by just 0.952%, some of his closest supporters argued immediately afterwards that the left had now won 'half' the movement. In fact the result showed just how tenuous the left's position was, particularly in the unions. The manoeuvres around the T&GWU vote were bad enough. But the real gulf between left activists and the rank and file was dramatically shown in the NUPE vote for Denis Healey which went against the whole policy and practice of the union.

Moreover, in the big wide world outside the hothouse of Labour Party politics the left was losing and we were losing badly. It is too simplistic to say that all the energy put into Tony Benn's campaign for Deputy could, if directed into the industrial arena, have won the battles for jobs going on in the summer and autumn of 1981. But while those marvellous fringe meetings at union conferences were preoccupied with the battle for Labour's leadership, they were ignoring the critical struggles in the workplaces, at Laurence Scotts and elsewhere up and down the country, where workers fought redundancies through occupations.

The fact that most of those struggles ended in defeat highlighted the serious erosion of working class industrial strength: strength upon which ultimately the power of a socialist movement rests. In truth, the labour movement's industrial base has been withering badly.

Extra parliamentary action

And it is too easy to place the blame for this on the right for its pitiful leadership of the Party and some of the unions. Of course that has been a major contribution to sapping the morale of workers and their confidence in a socialist alternative. Of course the right's latest drive for expulsions can only play into the hands of the media and the Tories. Of course the right has little original or coherent to say about policy. But the Labour left has done little to rebuild the sinews of the movement. It has concentrated on winning positions *within*, and now finds itself having shifted significantly towards the left the centre of gravity of a movement drifting towards the wilderness.

If the 'old' Labour left of Michael Foot and the Tribune group can be indicted for its narrow parliamentarianism that helped to sever the Party from its grass roots, the new Labour left can be criticised for paying only lip service to extra parliamentary action in its preoccupation with internal Party conflict. For instance, one left London Constituency Party has issued press releases over the past year repeatedly attacking the Party leadership without once taking up local issues such as the dampness afflicting council estates in the area.

This is not a plea for trimming, for populism or for accepting bad national leadership. It is to argue for a more activist role in the community, going outwards and involving people rather than preaching down at them and pretending that their interests are automatically catered for by the left. There is a sense of tautology in the way many Party activists think and operate: Labour is the 'Party of the working class', therefore it must be 'representing the working class'. QED. Even if the first part of this were true, the second part does not follow if the relationship with ordinary people is entirely passive.

Neglect of this extra parliamentary dimension and of the need to go out and actively win backing for radical policies has in part allowed the Party's right to take the initiative recently. The right has also been assisted by the fact that the leaders of the left have overplayed their hands this past year.

Power-stalemate

By and large the view taken has been to push on regardless, to fight to the last over Party positions, in the hope that the tactics which won the democratic reforms could also win final control of the Party.

But in the absence of positive support outside in the working class, the shortcomings of this approach have been exposed. The Labour Party has historically been a coalition between its left and right. And despite the SDP breakaway, it remains such a coalition. Indeed defections to the SDP have made it harder for the left to operate since our opponents are not so vulnerable to charges of disloyalty. What is more, the left, based in the constituencies and distanced as it largely is from the workplaces, is in great danger of driving the unions back into the arms of the right. This danger would increase if union leaders — understandably desperate to prevent a second Tory term of office that could see their organisations severely weakened — got the impression that the left was more interested in defeating the right in the Party than in winning the next election.

There is now a power stalemate in the Party, and the stark choice for Labour's left is not between what we have now and the more thoroughly socialist Party we want to see. The balance of forces inside and outside the labour movement preclude the latter development during this pre-election period. Instead the choice is between what we have now and continual internal wrangles which can only push the Party into the political periphery, and weaken the left in the process. It is simply not possible to shift the centre of gravity of the Party further leftwards without beforehand rebuilding the left's grass roots base.

That means revitalising Labour politics at constituency level, so that CLPs are transformed from the 'resolutionary' bodies they still tend to be, into active campaigning groups, linking with tenants, building workplace branches, working with the women's movement, ethnic minorities and community groups.

A new thrust

It also means giving rather more attention to the detail of policy. Much Labour left policy thinking is correct in general but woolly in practice. Moreover it should be remembered that unilateralism is the only major policy advance that has been won during this time of general left gains. And it was not won by lobbying for model resolutions in a political vacuum. It occurred because of the massive extra parliamentary movement for disarmament under the revived CND. Similarly, demands for equality for women have at last begun to make headway in the Party because of the upsurge in the women's movement outside.

Doubtless it will be argued that to press for a total re-orientation of the left's priorities, to call for a strategy of 'mass politics' as the Labour Coordinating Committee has done, is to dodge the here and now of the fight against the right and its so-called 'purge'.

But whilst it is crucial to stand firm against any expulsions, the central problem with which Labour's left will sooner or later have to come to grips is whether it continues to be bogged down in the all-consuming internal battles of the moment; or whether it recognises that we have a long term project of socialist transformation to tackle.

Unless we lift our eyes above the dust of the present conflict that project will continue to be neglected. And unless we go for bust (which will effectively mean jettisoning the link with the unions), the Party will remain for the forseeable future a coalition between left and right — with the continuing objective of shifting control and policy further to the left.

The momentous gains of recent years now need to be built upon in a new thrust to win the whole of the labour movement and the working class beyond to the alternative economic strategy and the other Party policies which alone offer an escape from the present crisis. □

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Channel Five

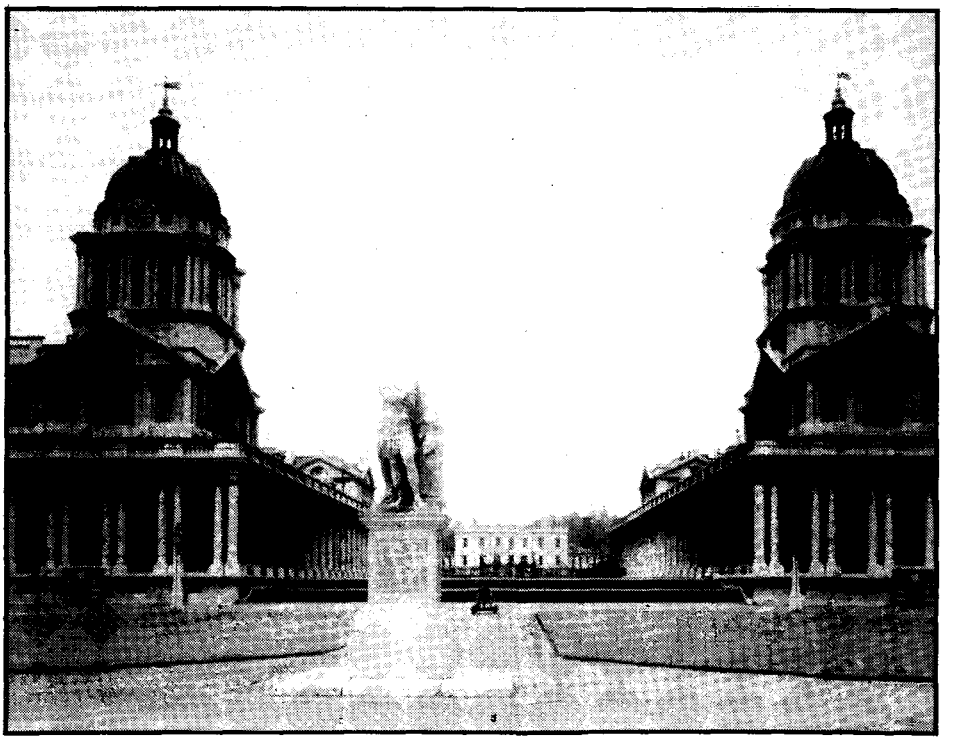
WREN'S REPUTATION

Nick Rowling

Most people are happy to accept the notion that Wren is the greatest English architect without really understanding why he might be entitled to this accolade. Certainly his supremacy has not always been recognised. In the eighteenth century Inigo Jones was considered the finer architect — Wren's work was criticised for its eclecticism, for its failure to adhere to classical precedent. In the nineteenth century his churches were vandalised by High Churchmen who disliked Wren's 'levelling' theology which placed clergy and laity within the same geometry. Gothic revivalists sniffed at Wren's gothic restorations of Westminster Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral, and at the gothic buildings he erected when classical architecture would have been out of place. It was only in the twentieth century that he was placed on his present pedestal by architects like Lutyens who ransacked his work for motifs and who transformed its elements into a nationalistic style for the dressing of town halls, banks, schools and scattered colonial capitals. Even now, 350 years after his birth, most architects and architectural historians would claim that his two lesser-known contemporaries Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh were better architects. And I suspect that many readers would agree with the comment of a friend of mine who dismissed him as 'Wren — the bourgeois humanist'.

None of this of course enables us to see Wren's achievement very clearly. Certainly he was a bourgeois humanist — but then so were Milton and Locke, Fielding and Defoe, and Wren had little in common with any of them. And if he was a bourgeois humanist he wasn't a bourgeois architect in the sense that he only designed a couple of country houses at a time when most of his contemporaries designed little else. More accurately he was a 'court architect' since he was Supervisor of the King's Works — but his most conspicuous failure is the dull pomposity of Hampton Court, so one can reasonably assume that his inventive brain wasn't stimulated by the problem of introducing cut-price absolutist architecture to England. But in general he was an architect who gave his clients what they wanted at a price they could afford, and his clients ranged from the Crown to the humble parish officers of the burnt-out city — and in the latter context he was, I think, a genuinely popular architect. In 60 years he was the man who was mainly responsible for the transformation of the ruined capital into a city (if Canaletto's painting is to be believed) which was almost as beautiful as Venice. Furthermore, if the parish wanted gothic then Wren gave it gothic, if it couldn't afford stone then Wren designed a brick church, and if it was really poor then Wren diverted funds from St Paul's to provide them with a building. And when he designed a school for city orphans he waived the fee. So if he was a bourgeois architect, he was at least a bourgeois architect with a social conscience.

Royal Naval Hospital, Greenwich.



But Wren was certainly more interesting than that. It's surprising in the twentieth century when we like to emphasise the importance of engineering in architecture that Wren's achievement isn't more generally recognised. Wren was a brilliant mathematician and scientist and a great structural engineer. The attic floor in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford was unprecedented in European architecture. Wren had to invent a new type of structure in crowning St Paul's with its enormous dome. St Stephen's Walbrook, nearby, could only have been designed by an architect who had both a passion for geometry and a mastery of materials. And it's here that we might begin to question the myth of Wren the architectural genius. Genius he certainly was, in any normal sense of the word, but his genius was rooted in the genius of his time.

Wren's achievement can only be understood if we remember that he developed at one of the most extraordinary moments in English intellectual history — the Commonwealth period — and at one of the most extraordinary institutions of learning — Wadham College, Oxford. Wadham, at that time, was a cross between a research institute of advanced science, a polytechnic and an agricultural college. Its ideology was utilitarian and experimental. Later he taught at Gresham College in London. Either here or at Wadham he must have come into contact with the brilliant instrument makers, shipwrights, navigators, clockmakers and other skilled artisans who had much to teach the university scientists, suffocated as they had been by Aristotelian ignorance.

Wren's first important building, the Sheldonian Theatre, demonstrates how much he

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Sir Christopher Wren by Sir Godfrey Kneller (National Portrait Gallery, London).

had learned. The style of the exterior is loosely derived from classical prototypes which he would have known only from illustrations in architectural treatises. But the brilliant solution to the problem of designing a room in which all members of the university could congregate is the work of a man nurtured in the utilitarian and experimental atmosphere of Commonwealth Oxford — the Oxford of Robert Boyle and William Harvey, Robert Hooke and John Wallis. Wren had no professional training in architecture yet his early work reveals a profound understanding of building techniques; so his tutors can only have been the craftsmen and artisans whose work he must have studied and admired in Oxford and London. Wren's dependence on the masons' and joiners' skills can be seen in the structure when one understands the technical demands he made upon them — demands which pushed structural engineering to new limits — and his delight in their art can be seen in the exuberant decoration which henceforth was to be such a conspicuous feature of his style.

The magnificent ceiling is decorated with a painting which provides another clue to the intellectual components of his style. It is an allegory of the arts and sciences and includes not only traditional subjects like theology and logic, but also those which had rapidly developed in the seventeenth century (despite the opposition of the universities) like chemistry, surgery and astronomy, and finally those which were in practice low-status artisan sciences like mathematics, geography and architecture; the latter symbolised by 'a workman holding a square in one hand and a plumbline in the other'.

The new status which Wren accorded artisans is reflected in his architecture and is in fact a fundamental component of his style. The surviving account books and files give clear evidence of how much he came to depend on their expertise. He compelled them to learn new skills and techniques and in turn gave them responsibilities and recognition which master craftsmen had not enjoyed since the middle ages. In 1705 a twenty pound gratuity was paid to William Kempster, a stonemason, for 'extraordinary diligence and care and his good performance'. Twenty pounds was the equivalent of a year's wages. A year later a master carpenter 'for his skill and extraordinary pains, care and diligence' was given fifty guineas — a man who had been shabbily treated by the Church Commissioners and then dismissed but whom Wren continued to employ. The safety record of St Paul's was equally remarkable. The building trade then was even more dangerous than it is today but the records reveal that only one workman at St Paul's was killed — another who was injured was compensated fully for the time he was unable to work. Facts like these explain why it was Wren's workmen who wrote defending him when he was falsely accused of malpractice.

This synthesis of artisan and intellectual expertise helps explain the variety and number of buildings attributed to Wren. Some we now know were designed by his friends with his assistance (like the Monument) or by his assistants like Hawksmoor. Others were largely the work of his master craftsmen working, with varying degrees of freedom, from Wren's sketches. That hundreds of buildings have been credited to Wren on nothing but stylistic evidence, shows well, I think, how much his craftsmen and assistants learned from him.

All this needs to be set in context. Wren wasn't William Morris but the key figure in one of the most concentrated and extensive industries of his day — the building trade. Not only did he design an enormous number of buildings and sit on numerous committees, he was also responsible for the organisation of a vast labour force — probably exceeded at that time only by the shipbuilding industry concentrated around Deptford. This labour force was stable, relatively well paid and loyal. At worst I think, one can accuse Wren of benevolent paternalism — but it wasn't the paternalism of New Lanark producing miles of identical cottons, but a paternalism which oversaw the erection of Greenwich Palace, Trinity College Library, St Mary le Bow, St Bride's and dozens of other masterpieces of design and craftsmanship. □

"Of all the Marxist/Leninist, revolutionary socialist tendencies in the world, you had to walk into THIS one!"

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Channel Five

INTERVIEW WITH HUGH JENKINS

Hugh Jenkins was appointed Minister for the Arts in 1974 under Harold Wilson. During his period in office (until 1976) he lifted the museum & gallery charges introduced by the previous Conservative administration, fought for the Public Lending Right and for a democratically elected Arts Council which provoked violent opposition in the media and within civil service and government circles. He is author of *The Culture Gap, An Experience of Government and the Arts*. Here he talks to Jonathan Chadwick.

During your period as Arts Minister what do you think were the main obstacles that stood in the way of your operating your policy.

I think the fact that one is working in a climate of opposition. I think that you have to accept that if you want to make changes those changes will be resisted. If you imagine that on moving into office everything is going to be made clear for you to carry out party policy and that everybody is going to be eager to implement party policy you are very gravely mistaken. I don't think I ever suffered from that illusion.

Do you think that the ability of Parliament to deliver the kind of policies that you thought were right for the arts was severely restricted?

I think that Parliament is capable of delivering a quite profound degree of change, provided that the will is there. And the will must be not only the will of an individual Minister but the will of Parliament as a whole, and in particular the will of the Cabinet. In my own case, I think the will for change was there as far as I was personally concerned but there was certainly little will for change in the arts in the Cabinet and precious little interest in Parliament.

Do you still see the connection between the developing and blossoming of an arts policy with the development of democracy as being an important one today?

Yes, I take the view which Oscar Wilde enunciated in one of his paradoxes. He said, if you remember, life imitates art. I think this is, like many of Oscar Wilde's sayings, more profoundly true than one would, perhaps, like to believe. I think it is true that if one looks around one often finds that the economic development of the arts is in the vanguard of economic development elsewhere. If the economy as a whole could follow economic developments in the arts they would perhaps do better than they have done. For example, in the mixed economy that we work in at the moment, in the arts we have an effective mixed economy with the gradual increase in the public sector and the gradual erosion of the private sector until at the present time, in most terms, the private sector plays a minority and not a controlling part in the economy of the theatre. This is not true elsewhere. But I have some hope that if it is true that life imitates art, the rest of the economy will in due course follow that pattern and the majority ruling tone will be set by the public sector.

In The Culture Gap *you describe a period towards the end of your office when you received a letter from the Arts Council in which the tone had changed and you realised that somehow you weren't as powerful as you had been and you were being treated differently by people in the corridors of power, you couldn't gain access to the Prime Minister and so on. What do you think you did to get that kind of cold shoulder treatment?*

I think the thing which I tried to do unsuccessfully, which determined the decision, or at least helped to decide, that I was to be dispensed with, or disposed of, was my attempt to introduce a certain amount of democracy into the Arts Council. At this point I moved into trying to take some power away from the Arts establishment, and I think that the Arts establishment determined that they were not going to lose that power. And I don't think they have lost it. I think the Arts establishment is still very strong.

Can you describe what you consider the Arts establishment to be?

Well, it's all those good and great and intelligent and sensitive people who believe honestly that this country has an artistic heritage and that public money must support and extend that heritage. They also believe that it is important that this money should be distributed and controlled and handed out by people who understand what they are doing, who are themselves not perhaps involved in the day-to-day hurly burly of the artistic struggle, and who are therefore, by that very fact, able to be objective, judicious, fair, and are able to hand down from above the state's benefactions, its help for the Arts — without themselves participating in the day-to-day running of the organisation. They believe that once people who are involved in the day-to-day working of the organisation get their hands on the process of distribution of the state's money, that this would lead to endless wrangles, arguments, disagreements and so forth, and therefore they think it undesirable that the people who are actually involved in the arts on a working basis shall have any representation.

In particular they are opposed very strongly to any of the organisations of the artistic people or the entertainment people, or the trade unions in the entertainment field particularly, or even the managerial associations, having their own voice on the Arts Council. People may be appointed by the Minister who have these interests, this knowledge, this background, but what they don't want, and this is really the key question, is anyone on the Arts Council who is answerable to anyone else. They don't want anyone on the Arts Council who would have to go back, for example, to Equity, and say, I did this, that or the other, and who could be recalled or replaced by Equity if they felt that he failed to do his job. When I tried to introduce an elected element into the Arts Council, it was at this point that I incurred the hostility of the artistic establishment.

You have argued that the Arts Council has to be changed, that the structure had been set up to respond to a certain amount of growth in artistic endeavour after the Second World War. You still see the Arts Council as a vital part of the arts scene in this country so apart from the democratisation and greater representation of working artists on the Council, what other changes do you see as necessary?

Well I don't want to see the Arts Council becoming *dirigiste*. I think the strength of the Arts Council has been that although it is theoretically concerned almost solely with standards and with quality, and only secondarily concerned with spreading the arts and appreciation of the arts, it hasn't actually done anything about standards at all. It has

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Campaigning for election, 1974

merely concerned itself with encouraging the spread of the arts. To my mind this is right. What has worried me about the developments in the last two years of the Arts Council is the gradual growth of the notion that it should become more selective, must choose, must reduce the number of people that it supports; that it should have the power to say that one thing is okay and that another is not. Although the Arts Council must do a certain amount of that — it's in the nature of things that it does — the moment it gets into its head the notion that *it* really determines the direction of artistic activity in the country, then that is the road to disaster and, in my view, the Arts Council has set out on that road.

What developments would you like to see? The Arts Council still does have to choose who to give its money to?

It has to have some theory on which to base its activities. And the theory which it based itself on in the past was called the response theory — the Arts Council did its best to respond to applications which came up to it. It did not at any time say to itself, well now, there ought to be a theatre in such and such a place, so what can we do to encourage the development of a theatre at that point. It waited to see whether Little Puddleton enunciated a notion of wanting a theatre, and then it did its best to respond to that. That, in my view is the right way. The requests should come up. The whole notion of patronage from above is wrong.

Democracy is important, not in itself, but because it reverses the flow of power. At the moment the flow of power in the Arts Council is from the Minister down. He appoints the Council. The Council appoints the Advisory Panels, so that the Council is advised by people that it itself appoints. So that is the flow from the top down. If the Arts Council doesn't create its own internal democracy, then eventually the Arts Council will become the creature of the state. You will get to the position of a state-controlled theatrical and artistic activity, which, in my view, is quite the opposite of what we want. We don't want to see created in this country our own version of socialist realism — and that is the direction in which we are at present moving, under a Conservative government.

Do you think it is important to devolve power from the Arts Council to regional arts councils?

Yes. It's a difficult question because when you devolve, you nearly always devolve to people who are quite likely to be less well-informed about the subject than you are yourself; therefore the recipients of state support in the arts are rather apprehensive about this. If you were to ask any of those large regional theatrical companies what they think about the devolution of power from the Arts Council to the regional arts associations, almost all of them would hold up their hands and say no, we prefer the devil we know. Nevertheless it's a question which must be gone through. It has to be done carefully and gradually, over a period of time. But I think it is very important that regional arts associations shall be established and that local authorities shall play a much larger part than they do at present in arts patronage. And there are some local authorities I wouldn't trust with a Punch and Judy show. But they must be brought gradually to recognise their responsibilities in this field. Once you start off the ball of municipal emulation, you're in. It's a great business. Once one local authority does something, other authorities think, well so can we.

How much do you feel that the limitation of the Minister's power serves to institutionalise the culture gap? Do you think the Minister of Arts job should be broadened?

Yes. Jenny Lee's White Paper of 1965 called, in the arts, for generosity, imagination and coherence. There's been something of the first two, but precious little of the third. Until you get a coherent framework at the top, you will not get people knowing what is happening throughout the whole scene. You can't know what is happening when you have a situation in which the popular arts, and popular forms of entertainment, are nothing to do with the Arts

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Ministry. At the moment, for example, sport comes under, in so far as it comes under anything at all, of all things, the Department of the Environment, with Mr Heseltine at its head. Films are divided into a small group which comes under the Arts Ministry, and a large group which comes under the Department of Trade. Or is it Industry? At any rate it doesn't matter which. They are both totally unsuitable. Of all things, the Home Office controls television and radio. This is a recipe for disaster. What is miraculous is that under this chaotic situation, we have done as well as we have done. It's not surprising that we haven't got a film industry, when the department that is in charge of it, in so far as anyone is, is totally uninterested in the subject. It is necessary to create a new department, bringing together all these responsibilities, under a single Minister, who, if he had a department of that size, would rate Cabinet status.

I suppose that it is only in that way that you would get a political coherence that would defy, in some way, the massive commercial interests that are involved in that area?

Not only that. This is the only way in which you can redistribute finance effectively within the area. The whole condition of the theatre, for example, has always been of the popular supporting the more advanced area. Even an actor/manager in the old days would put on the things that he did easily, which got the crowds in, and then every now and then he'd have a go at something which rather interested him, something different. This is still done in a strange way — television gives a little money to the theatre, in order to try to encourage its seed corn. But if you had a Ministry, the £30m that the Treasury captures from television would go back into the business. At the moment it has to go through the Treasury and then out again through the Arts Council.

In the last two years things have changed radically with the coming of videos. Do you think that with the Tory government and with this new development in leisure industry, the culture gap has widened?

Yes. I think there is something essentially anti-cultural in capitalist society. I'm not quite sure where this comes from, but it does seem that in their endeavours to meet popular taste as it is called, there is a tendency to debase the very tastes that they are seeking to meet. In meeting that taste at the lowest level there is an anti-cultural element, and so I think it might be said that as the mass economy develops there is an almost inevitable tendency for public taste to depreciate rather than to improve. At the moment there is a worrying tendency in that the division between the relatively small group who appreciate what used to be called the fine arts, and the mass of the people, is growing. Unless conscious endeavours are made all the time by a powerful state machine to work in the opposite direction, then I think this gap will widen. I think it has widened.

You played quite an important part in the development of the idea of art being brought closer to the community. What do you think of the GLC's policy in that respect?

I know what the GLC says its policy is, and as far as what it says, I've gone along with it. I think Tony Banks has one quality which I think is very valuable — he is capable of learning from experience. I heard one or two things said at a conference held at the National Film Theatre which I thought were wholly wrong — not by Tony necessarily, but by some people. They were trying to set up the poor arts, the community arts, against the fine arts. This is wrong. There ought to be room in any sane society for the existence of the 'great' arts, of opera even, elitist though it is in its present manifestations. This is not a criticism of the art form. It is a criticism of the society within which the art form exists. Most Eastern European countries succeed in getting a reasonable cross-section of the population into their opera houses. The notion that you should stop giving money to the opera, in order to give more to community theatre, is balderdash. If you stop giving that money to opera, it won't go to community theatre. That money will go out of the arts altogether.

The impression that you get is that most of the money goes to people who seem to live in a different world from ordinary people — over there in the Barbican, in that art world.

You are right, art is essentially a middle class thing, and it doesn't go much below that. I think I said in the book that I don't think any manual worker has ever set foot inside the Arts Council building, except to clean it. That is the case, and we need to do something about it. But that, again, is a criticism of our society, rather than of the arts. We need to develop the consciousness, which was there, in the old CEMA days — when the Arts Council sprang from the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts. CEMA went out into the country and took the arts to the people. Sybil Thorndike going to the miners and so forth, orchestras going to play Peterborough Cathedral. People could go for nothing; there was no charge. That motivation has been lost, but it's been lost throughout society, not only in the arts. Jenny Lee did try, in her arts paper, to encourage the spread of regional arts associations and thought that this would be a means of spreading art to a greater number of people. In fact it didn't really turn out that way, because the whole development of regional arts associations was mismanaged by the succeeding Conservative Minister. He did one or two good things, to be fair. He put more money into the arts and the Arts Council, and then put more money into the regional arts associations, without making it a condition that that money was matched locally. Consequently the regional arts associations which started off on a fifty fifty basis, between national government and local government, finished up by being 80% national government, 20% local government. But that was a mistake which could have been rectified. But of course, you've got to make it possible for local government to put money into the arts, to encourage them to do so.

About ten years ago it seemed that those barriers — where a working class person would feel that a theatre wasn't their own theatre — were breaking down. There was a convergence of different classes, a mixture of ideas. This shouldn't be over-estimated but there was a certain movement. What hope do you see for the development of the arts?

In looking forward to the future, one has to assume that there will be no war. Otherwise there is no point in looking forward. What one needs, not only for the development of the arts, but also for other things, is a series of Labour governments. In all kinds of different ways there's an awakening in the party. They're even beginning to see the importance of the arts — that's one of the last things that the party would ever think about at that level. But it's got to permeate through. It will only come about as part of a general development. So, in the immediate future, it's important to get the Labour Party to realise that the arts are important, that they are not only a reflection of society, but they do also have an effect on society. It's also important that more and more people take part in the business of actually performing the arts. That's important for the health of society.

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Reviews

MAIN CURRENTS OF MARXISM:
Vol I The Founders
Vol II The Golden Age
Vol III The Breakdown
Leszek Kolakowski
Oxford University Press 1981
pbk £3.95 each
ISBN 0 19 285 107 1/108 X/109 8.

IS THERE A FUTURE FOR MARXISM?
Alex Callinicos
Macmillan 1982 pbk £6.95
ISBN 0 333 28479 8

A CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL MATERIALISM
Anthony Giddens
Macmillan 1981 hbk £12.95 pbk £4.95
ISBN 0 333 30971 5

These books are indicative of (in Marx's phrase) the voracious appetite shown by researchers in recent years to pass sentence on the central tenets of Marxism as a theoretical system. Each is concerned principally with the conceptual adequacy of Marxism as social theory, and only secondarily with its historical and political formation and effect. Therefore the question 'does Marxism have a future?' is more '*should* it have a future?' than '*will* it have one?' Kolakowski, expelled as professor of philosophy at Warsaw and now harboured at All Souls, Oxford, answers firmly and negatively. Giddens, a prominent sociologist, is less pronounced in his dismissal, but wants to develop his own constructive alternative. Callinicos, a younger Marxist favouring broadly Trotskyist political perspectives, defends 'classical' Marxism against some of the sceptics.

Of the three, Kolakowski's project (it is more than a book) is the most impressive. It is an achievement of scholarship and analysis in the grand manner, something that has been reflected in the near-hysterical praise received in academic reviews. He systematically deals with every important and famous Marxist figure in the tradition, and a few besides that you may not even have heard of. Despite Kolakowski's embittered tone and harsh judgements, the format whereby exposition and critique in each chapter are kept (relatively) separate is useful. As a consequence, these volumes are an indispensable reference work: if you want to know the arguments of, and issues raised by, particular Marxist theorists, Kolkowski sets them out in patient and lucid prose.

However, Kolakowski is no mere purveyor of others' ideas; he wants to bury Marxism as well as teach it. Here, his own experience certainly intrudes. For example, Lenin is pilloried as a philosopher — and in my view this demolition holds some weight (IIp457-8). But Kolakowski weakens his case by crudely reducing such failings to Lenin's alleged instinct for psychological hatred rather than arguments (IIp521).

His reasonably even-handed expositions, then, occasionally degenerate into mere invective. One particularly crude criticism is that Marx invented a messianic prophecy of proletarian conquest, then grubbed around for supporting evidence (Ip373). This is neither scholarly nor convincing, and it undermines Kolakowski's general and persuasive argument that in Marx's own work there are competing and contradictory emphases which help explain the variety of twentieth-century Marxist lineages.

Other judgements are arresting: the obscurantism of Lukacs and Marcuse are especially severely dealt with. The account of Althusser is maybe more contentious, but some Marxists would agree that 'apart from a few neologisms, Althusser did not make any fresh contribution to theory' (IIIp486).

Overall, Kolakowski concludes that the Marxist theses, if held strictly, are dogmatic and false; if held loosely, they are said to be simply banal. Yet is is conceded that the 'triviality' of historical materialism is due to the fact that Marx's original and fundamental work has passed into common currency. This strikes me as a reason for *refusing* Kolakowski's conclusion, not as a support for it. The inconsistency in the conclusion, I think, runs parallel to Kolakowski's temptation to take on two initial, but diverging tasks. One is to argue that it makes no sense to ask who, today, is a 'true' Marxist, or which political strategy is the 'culmination' of Marxism's intellectual evolution. The other task is Kolakowski's deeply-felt desire to show 'the strange fate of an idea which began in Promethean humanism and culminated in the monstrous tyranny of Stalin' (Ip5).

Alex Callinicos' book is in part a survey of a number of debates which have also seemed to undermine the philosophical basis of Marxism. He capably reviews the coalescence of strands of linguistics, cultural theory, and psychoanalysis. These theories advocate a concept of the human subject and social practices as necessarily multiple and incoherent rather than single and unified. Their result is to challenge the idea of human self-consciousness and the traditional basis of Western philosophy, the subject-object relation.

Callinicos shows how Althusser's work bestraddles these 'post-structuralist' insights on the one hand, and Marxism on the other. It is generally accepted that Althusser's synthesis fails, though commentators differ sharply about its merit and suggestiveness. One key question in these debates is the consequence of the fact that classical Marxism does indeed share some of the theoretical assumptions of the philosophical tradition placed in question by the work of Lacan, Derrida, and other modern French thinkers. Callinicos speaks up for the rationality of those assumptions, at least where they are of a materialist character, and he contests the charge made by the influential Michel Foucault that the relation between knowledge and physical power over the body is more pervasive and fundamental than is allowed for in Marxist theory.

This defence is intelligent but rather thinly spread. Callinicos (rightly I think) supports a scientific 'realist' theory of knowledge, which embraces Marxism, and which tries to combine the shaping force of theories with a belief in an objective causal order in nature and society. But these ideas are mentioned rather than developed, and other notions (such as 'immanent rationality') are cited but are left under-explained. Similarly, Callinicos protects Marxism from caricature, but his chapters on 'contradic-

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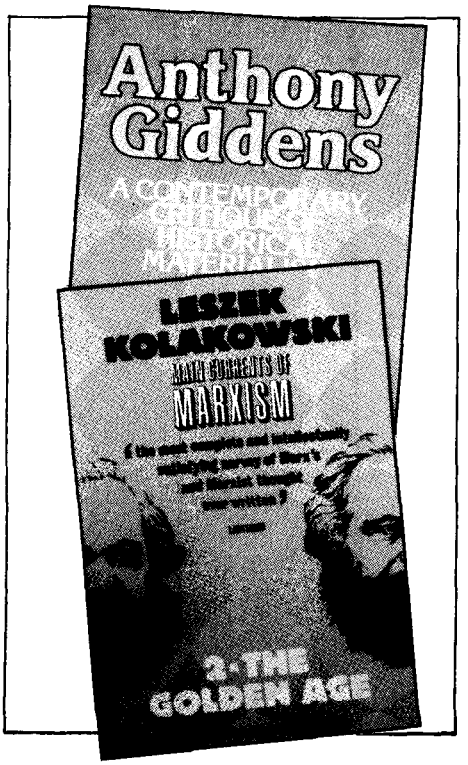
tion' and the passages on value-theory seem to me to deflect the task of engaging with the new currents described by Callinicos and whose outlook derives as much from Neitzsche as from Marx. The inner-Marxist debates are also uneven in treatment and cogency. Callinicos gets away with just a two-page dismissal of GA Cohen's recent painstaking restatement of historical materialism, yet we are given a lengthy Trotskyist account of the revolutionary party and of 'east-west state capitalism'. Some of this is interesting, if somewhat predictable, but the overall impression is of a potentially useful book caught between slightly different objectives.

Anthony Giddens aims to reject historical materialism whilst holding on to Marx's idea that capitalism is the most fully class-divided society. He develops these prongs of argument on the basis of what he calls his 'theory of structuration'. He also hopes to inaugurate a new non-functionalist *style* of social analysis. This ambition gives rise to frequently repeated claims to have discovered a new vein in social theory — claims which stand in ironic contrast to Giddens' hope, expressed in the preface, that readers will take his explorations as preliminary only.

The substance of Giddens' critical stance is that Marx's emphasis on the primacy of the forces of production in social development, and his stress on the class basis of any surplus product, are mistaken. Instead, the appropriation of nature in pre-capitalist societies is said to be governed by the forms of social 'authorisation', and is accomplished according to culturally-specific notions of time and space. In an effort to escape the pitfalls of evolutionism and subjectivism, Giddens tries to chart a path which respects both the power of human agency and the structural conditions within which that agency operates.



Valuable though Giddens' critical summaries can be, his theoretical framework is, in my view, delicately founded and inconclusive. Putting together many insights from different academic disciplines is certainly a helpful enterprise (though historians' researches seem under-represented). However, that in itself does not constitute a theory, and three areas of criticism can be suggested. First, Giddens appears to lay personal claim to several objections to Marxism which are entirely familiar from earlier non-Marxist and Marxist debates: for example, the rejection of the 'Asiatic' mode of production and of the concept of mode of production itself; the importance of the city in pre-capitalism, and the role of the nation state in the formation of capitalism; the 'evolutionism' of the productive forces argument, and the under-emphasis in Marxism of nationalism and the coercive logic of states' regimes of surveillance over their 'deviant' subjects.

Second, the theory of structuration is general to the point of vagueness. To say, for example, that power is generated through the reproduction of structures of domination (p4) is all but tautologous. This illustrates Giddens' facility for coining promising *definitions* (so that we hold on to both structure and agency). But his main ideas receive limited *philosophical* elaboration, and seem too classificatory to generate more *historical* explanations.

Third, Giddens adds little to Marx on the nature of capitalism itself. True, he says this. But one comes away from the book feeling that Marx is supporting Giddens, rather than the reverse! The latter's terminology of 'authoritative' and 'allocative' resources (replacing relations and forces of production) doesn't provide an obvious contrast to those discredited terms, at least in some extended definitions of both sets (cfp105). This point is not made in order simply to return to Marx here; but it is to warn against alternatives which give Marx less than his full due.

This somewhat uncharitable conclusion should not gainsay Giddens' interesting appropriation of geographical and existential ideas for sociology. And certainly, his thoughts on the modern state pose genuine dilemmas for Marxists and others who envisage the transition to socialism as a distinct moral advance. But in the context of the inflated claims currently made by and on behalf of the author, it is not unreasonable to say that he has not produced a new social theory, nor has he — in my view — pioneered a particularly novel or attractive analytical style.

Gregor McLennan

MISSING
Thomas Hauser
Penguin 1982 pbk £1.75
ISBN 0 14 006453 2

ASSASSINATION ON EMBASSY ROW
John Dinges and Saul Landau
Writers and Readers, 1981, hbk £6.95
ISBN 0 906495 43 1

An unnerving symmetry emerges from these two books. One tells of Charles Horman, born in New York City, and murdered in the national stadium in Santiago, Chile within days of the coup of September 1973; the other of Orlando Letelier, a Chilean who was blown to bits in Washington DC in September 1976. These deaths, of a US citizen in Chile and of a Chilean in the USA, were linked by the thread of counter-revolution. In each case the Chilean government was directly responsible. And in each case, as the authors demonstrate, the State Department and the CIA were deeply implicated, in all probability having foreknowledge of each murder. Indeed, in Horman's case the only convicing explanation is that US representatives in Santiago planned and ordered his execution — a direct link having been established between the Chilean military and the US embassy. In the more complicated and protracted organisation of Letelier's death, the thread coiled around Chile, Paraguay and Miami before leading to the CIA in Langley, Virginia and Washington.

It's a neat irony, then, that it was due to the work of Hollywood (so frequently written off as the most infamous agent of US cultural imperialism) that Costa-Gavras was able to produce the film of *Missing* so that — to the discomfort of the State Department — the circumstances of Charles Horman's death could be relayed to a mass public.

It's not often, in its tenth year of fascism, that Chile hits the metropolitan media. The brutal shock of September 1973, Chile's cruellest spring, is unlikely to disappear from collective political memory for at least another generation. But aside from the catastrophic trauma of the defeat itself, the experience and political realities of dictatorship — as the Franco regime illustrated — don't make news. The labour movement is still torn to pieces; the terror, more selective and

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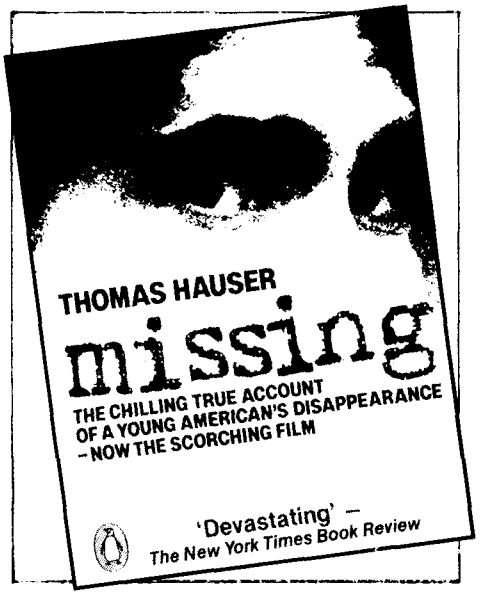

highly-tuned than in the early years, is no less effective; and accelerating unemployment moves in line with the Chicago programme of cheap credit and an influx of consumer goods for the wealthy, marking a deepening social polarisation and immiseration. According to some estimates a tenth of Chile's population is now scattered throughout every city in Europe and North America, a diaspora in which thousand upon thousand endure the emotional and political pains of exile. Those Madison Avenue agencies employed by the Chilean state have done well, endeavouring to keep their client unobserved — an international football match, a minor earthquake, but little more. Even during the Falklands crisis the cynical deal between Mrs Thatcher and General Pinochet was wrapped so tight it barely touched the front pages or TV screens.

Missing, written by a Manhattan lawyer, derives from a radical, liberal Perry Mason tradition within the United States, one which concentrates above all on the constitutional rights of the individual citizen. This is both its strength and weakness. The book gives a potted, journalistic account of Popular Unity and its destruction (quoting the extraordinary document conjured up in the first days of Allende's government by Nixon, Kissinger and Helms, promising to 'make the Chilean economy scream'). It recounts Charles Horman's tourist trip on the eve of the coup to Vina, on the Pacific Ocean, during which he stumbled across a number of US counter-insurgency personnel who happened to brag to him about their work. This arbitrary chain of events appears to have been the major reason for his downfall. On his return to Santiago he was taken

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● **Oakleaf Books** 109 Church St, Wolverton, Milton Keynes. Tel 0908-314366. Socialist-feminist bookshop.

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from his home to the national stadium, transported to the Ministry of Defence for interrogation (with a US official in tow) and then killed. The narrative pace and political impact of the book derive from the reconstruction of the search for Charles conducted by his father, Ed Horman — a grizzly odyssey through morgues, hospitals, prisons and endless offices. At every turn the US embassy obstructed these investigations. Gradually Ed Horman, the conservative Christian Scientist, comes to appreciate the full degree of US complicity in his son's disappearance.

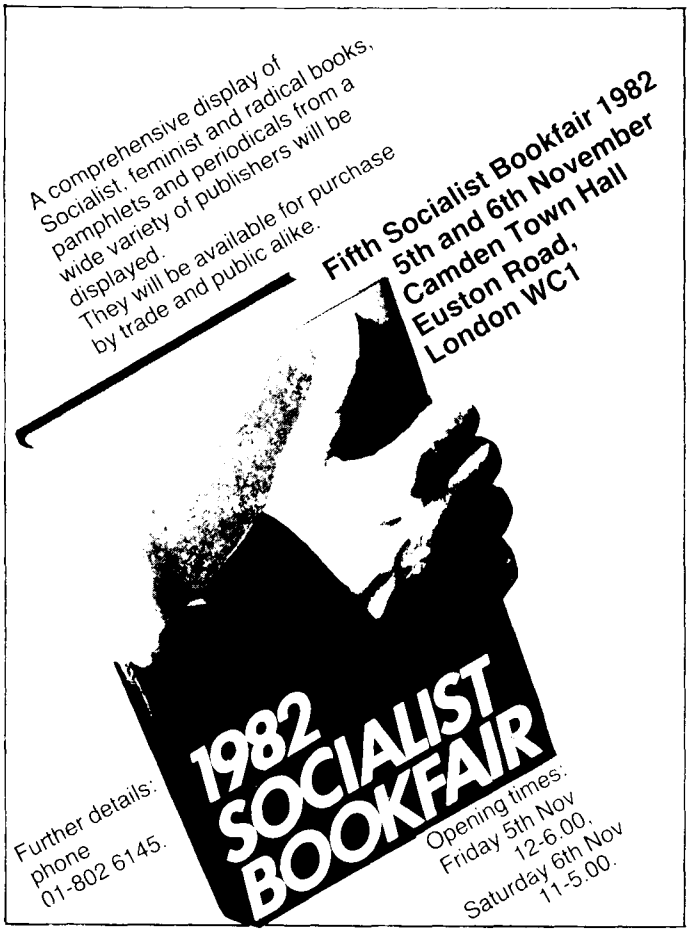
It's a revealing, sympathetic account, dramatising an individual American's disillusionment with his government, and time and again forces the reader up against the facts of US involvement in Latin America, as it did for the Hormans. A book like this does not attempt to explore these relations politically. But almost despite itself, it demonstrates that when one pushes to the limit constitutionalist liberalism, there follow more questions than answers.

Assassination on Embassy Row, although of the same genre of investigative journalism, is altogether weightier. Undoubtedly it will have less popular impact, but it is a superb book. It, too, focuses on an individual, Orlando Letelier — Allende's ambassador to Washington and Minister of Defence at the time of the coup. After internment on the notorious Dawson Island, touching the tip of the Antarctic, Letelier was freed and became active in the resistance against Pinochet. He was murdered as a result. But however moving is the account of Letelier's heroism, the sweep of the book's analysis is broader than this alone. Tracing the development, under General Contreras, of the Chilean secret police, the DINA, and one of its agents, Michael Townley, the authors connect Letelier's murder to the attacks on General Prats in Buenos Aires in 1974, and on the Christian Democrat, Bernardo Leighton, in Rome in 1975.

The most remarkable sections of the book, however, analyse the shifting balance of forces inside the junta in 1977, which forced Pinochet to announce during that summer his 'Chacarillas' plan. By this period the continuation of Contreras's strategy of wholesale and systematic repression against all the regime's opponents was becoming politically too costly. By and large mass terror had already done its job. Pressure from the Chicago-trained technocrats, organised around *El Mercurio*, and from Carter's 'human rights' policy gave Pinochet no option but to break with Contreras, his old pal and political crony, and to dismantle Contreras's personal empire, DINA included. The Letelier murder provided the pretext and Contreras was dismissed. But as the authors show, few government officials in the United States were keen to indict the Chilean authorities for the Letelier murder, for that would have brought accusations too close to home. Townley and his gang of Cuban exiles were charged in the US courts and convicted. Pinochet, no doubt involved from the start, was not only rid of Letelier, but also managed to ride out the internal political crisis.

Letelier was an important political figure. Thousands more Chileans who died in the streets and dungeons will never be the subjects of bestsellers: their memory will take a different form, at once more collective and more personal. But the scenario is not one of complete catastrophe. Resistance in Chile is by no means obliterated, and the exiled groups, though badly fragmented, periodically show hope of effecting a transcendence of their enforced marginality. And once more the role of the USA in Latin America is again prominent in the news. However, in the foreseeable future the strategic destiny of Chile lies less within its own frontiers than in the current struggles in Central America, Bolivia and Argentina.

Bill Schwarz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LETTERS

THE UNIONS

There is a saying to the effect that a spoonful of tar will spoil a barrel full of honey. It is a pity that Tony Lane did not have such a thought in mind before including his provocative and divisive remarks on "perks and fiddles" by "a new working class elite" of shop stewards and other trade union delegates. Especially as in that context he refers to the TGWU buying a London hotel *to reduce the expenses* of said shop stewards and delegates. Or does he think they should camp out on the Embankment?

At the same time it would be no less a pity if the outburst of indignation which predictably followed Tony Lane's purple patch (which no less predictably was seized on by the anti-trade union press as a welcome gift) diverted attention from the purport of the main body of the article. The impact on the trade union movement of de-industrialisation and the restructuring of remaining industry is too serious an issue to be lost sight of, and on this issue Tony Lane's article breaks new ground and merits thoughtful consideration.

Dave Goodman, Stoke

WOMEN WRITERS

I have a complaint to make! Why so many male contributors to Marxism Today? Over the last few months the male contribution has varied between 62 and 83%. There is no shortage of women on the Left able to contribute so why are there not more in the pages of Marxism Today?

Certainly a lack of confidence may be part of the reason because the great (but false) mystique surrounding writing does discourage people — but this discourages many men as well. From my experiences I'm sure that when potential subjects and contributors are thought of for the journal it is men and male values that come to mind — and BIG NAME contributors to boot! Except that is where specifically 'women's issues' are involved. I suggest male values are embodied in the emphasis Marxism Today places on particular topics — for instance, why are there more women writers of the shorter articles than of the 'Features'? How does the Editorial Board think of contributors —what networks are used to get contributions?

A conscious policy is needed to break down the divide between 'women's issues' which you get women to write about and 'mainstream' political issues, which tend to be dominated by men. I hear in the CP of the need to encourage women to write, to take part, to contribute, to speak etc. But what feminists are in large part saying is aimed at the men and male values — you must change your attitudes, your values, your journals and newspapers, *you* must become knowledgeable about feminism and feminist issues. Such changes would remove many of the barriers that prevent women's equal participation.

Mary Braithwaite, Cardiff

RELIGION

Paul Fauvet (Letters in September issue) makes too sweeping an attack on religion. Some religionists who use religion to support USA militarism, ruling class supremacy, racism, and so on, ought to be vehemently attacked. Yet many others though non-marxist (eg: believing man utterly depends upon God), are not anti-marxist, being progressive on issues such as peace, ecology, economic structures, racial harmony. Also there are a few religionists, such as myself, who claim to be Marxist. Thus we don't believe God is all powerful, but is evolving and needs humanity as much as vice versa; and that humanity is evolving with the right and duty to forge its own destiny, etc. 'Process' and other forms of radical theology are not necessarily incompatible with Marxism.

Obviously more than a short letter is required to thoroughly argue this case or describe the complexities of the issue: witness the long history of writings on Marxist-Christian dialogue. Was the atheism of Marx and Engels a fundamental crucial essential or a natural stance forced by particular contemporary religious theory and practice?

To achieve a Marxist society requires both strenuous opposition to religionists of ill-will and honest co-operation with religionists of good-will; including a full acceptance of the few whose doctrines do not contradict Marxist concepts of humanity, the economic basis of society, etc. Such a view is not alien to the comments of Lenin.

Rev Philip Reynolds, Huddersfield

WALES

Dave Lloyd, in his comments on my article, 'Land of our Fathers' (August issue) invents a curious but revealing fiction of his own when he refers to (I quote) 'the fears of the English Welsh, *as he calls them'* (my italics).

I have never used the expression 'English Welsh' in my life. The article, which took some pains to distinguish between language and nationality, employed the term 'English-speaking Welsh'; which is a banal but neutral and clinically accurate description of the four-fifths of the Welsh population and the two-thirds of the native Welsh who use the English language.

If Dave Lloyd is in so wretched a state that he finds himself not only incapable of distinguishing between the two usages but also seized with an irresistible urge to infect other people with the same disease, he should abstain from writing about Wales until he has cured himself of this distressing affliction.

Gwyn A. Williams, Cardiff

LEFT FAMILIES

Gwyn Williams' remarks on the family (August issue) were naive, ill-considered and ultra-leftist. As such they were tailor-made for selective quotation in a Sunday Times leading article (22/8) which I, as a Communist, found politically embarrassing.

I run a social work unit dealing with family problems and trying, with very limited resources, to defend working-class family life from the ravages of a capitalist system in decay. If Gwyn wants a target for his rhetoric he should try Tory hypocrisy on the subject of the family. They have been working hard to abolish the family — for real, not on paper.

It may not be trendy, but I'm for the family. I do not see the working-class surviving this crisis without it. They will need to defend the family just as surely as they defend their unions, cooperatives and political parties.

I am fed up with utopias which seem to envisage a future where children are confined in state-run orphanages while the unemployed "grown-ups" sit around trying to work out what sex they are. I don't know if such spectres haunt the bourgeoisie, but they scare the hell out of me.

Gordon Wardman, Harlow

We welcome your letters for the November issue. They should be no longer than 200 words and arrive at the office not later than Friday 8 October.

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NOTES

ART IN ACTION AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

Kate Sullivan writes: 'Art in action against unemployment' is the title of a national political poster competition presented by the Communist Party. Art in the service of the labour and democratic movement is a sadly neglected area. The purpose of the competition is to encourage artists and designers who want to work for the movement; to bring them into contact with the many campaigns and causes that need their help; and to bring progressive political art to a wider public.

Entries will be judged by a panel including Ken Sprague (artist); Christine Roche (cartoonist); John Gorman (author/Fine Art printer); Fred Lambert (London College of Printing); Sarah Kent (art critic and broadcaster); and Richard Scott (of Leeds Postcards). John Berger has agreed to sponsor the competition. The winning entry will receive a holiday for two in Bologna, Italy and there will be cash prizes for the runners-up. All entries will be exhibited at a central London venue and subsequently around the country. Winning entries will be made available, with the artist's consent, to labour and democratic movement organisations for use in their current campaigns.

Entry forms from Kate Sullivan, CPGB, 16 St John St, London EC1. To be returned not later than 19 November 1982. The competition closes on 1 December 1982.

RUTH FIRST

Laurence Harris writes: Ruth First was killed by a letter bomb, undoubtedly of South African origin, on 17 August. She died at the Centre for African Studies, Edouardo Mondlane University, Mozambique where she was Research Director.

The Centre is a uniquely successful institution combining theory and practice in its teaching and research. The research and reports Ruth and her colleagues at the Centre have produced are major Marxist contributions to Mozambique's development strategy. Recently they have become central to the attempts of the southern African states (in SADCC) to free themselves from economic links with South Africa. The bomb was aimed against this work in which Ruth's leadership was outstanding. It was part of the general offensive the South Africans and their Western allies are mounting to destabilize socialist countries throughout the region.

The attack was also against Ruth as a South African who since her student days had a lifetime of struggle against apartheid and imperialism. A member of the Communist Party and of the African National Congress she had fought as an activist, as the editor of the radical *Guardian* (and, when banned, its successors) and of *Fighting Talk*. Throughout the 1950s her uncompromising journalism exposed apartheid's crimes experienced daily by black South Africans. With Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, her husband Joe Slovo and many other activists she was a defendant in the 1956 Treason Trial in which all were acquitted. In 1963, without trial, she was jailed in solitary confinement for 117 days and then exiled.

Ruth First and her family settled in north London where her work on Africa and for liberation continued through the 1960s and 1970s. There she wrote several books including *Barrel of a Gun, Libya,* and *The South African Connection* and co-authored a major biography of Olive Schreiner, an outstanding South African woman of an earlier period. Her latest book, *Black Gold,* about to be published by Harvester Press is the outcome of one of the earliest projects of the Centre for African Studies.

Ruth First is the latest loss as a result of the increasing terrorism of South Africa's racists. The tributes British Marxists can pay to this intensely committed intellectual and activist are increased solidarity with the African National Congress and against the destabilisation of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe.

MARXISM TODAY DESIGN

As our designers will be leaving in the near future we invite applications from people with suitable experience for the job of designing and pasting up Marxism Today each month. The work also involves picture research and needs good organisational ability. This is not a staff job and is undertaken on a freelance basis. Some commitment to the magazine would be expected.

Write to Peter Hammarling at the editorial office for more information.

JAMES KLUGMANN PICTORIALS

Alan Fox writes: Some of the treasures from the unique archive of James Klugmann, former editor of *Marxism Today* and collector extraordinary, are being reproduced for a wider audience. Two series of postcards — Women's Suffrage and Chartism — are already in the shops. This month sees the republication of *Communist Cartoons,* cartoons from *The Communist* 1921-22, by Espoir and others, with a new introduction by Eric Hobsbawm, available from bookshops at £4.95.

CINEMA OF WOMEN

Jane Root writes: A new catalogue of feminist films is available from Cinema of Women, Britain's feminist film distributor. It contains details of 35 films which are for hire and sale on subjects like work hazards, violence against women, abortion and pornography. Cinema of Women also distributes feature length films such as the classic *Maidens In Uniform* which is now available for hire to film clubs and women's groups.

The catalogue is free with a SAE from Cinema of Women, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 tel 01 251 4978.

FURTHER MARX MEMORABILIA

Nidge Tovey writes: to add to your collection of Marx mementos, we have produced a very high quality enamel badge, for the Marx centenary. The badge is in red, and shows Marx's head. They've been produced by Covent Garden Communist Party branch, and cost £1 each. There are discounts for bulk orders. Orders to and further information from Nidge Tovey, 16 St John Street, London EC1 tel 251 4406.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Paul Flather is a journalist at *The Times Higher Education Supplement.*
Mike Morrissey is a lecturer in the Dept of Applied Social Studies at Ulster Polytechnic.
Peter Fowler is a journalist.
Eric Hobsbawn is the author of *The Age of Capital* and, with others, *The Forward March of Labour Halted?*
The Revd Kenneth Leech is Race Relations Field Officer of the General Synod Board for Social Responsibility. The article is a personal view and must not be taken to represent the view of the board.
Andre Gunder Frank is a professor at the Universities of Amsterdam and East Anglia and is the author of *Crisis in the World Economy.*
Steve Iliffe is a GP and an editor of *Medicine in Society.*
Peter Hain is prospective Labour parliamentary candidate for Putney.
Hugh Jenkins was Arts Minister in the 1974 Wilson government.
Jonathan Chadwick is a director at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield.
Nick Rowling works at the Architectural Association and the Open University.
Ray Lowry is a freelance cartoonist.
Bill Schwarz teaches at North East London Polytechnic.
Gregor McLennan teaches at the Open University.

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